

HISTORY  
OF THE  
UNITED CO-OPERATIVE  
BAKING SOCIETY



JUBILEE - - 1869-1919







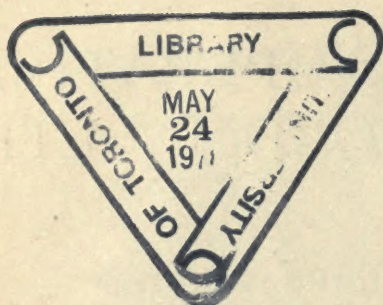












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## PREFACE.

THE chief advantage of prefaces is the opportunities they give authors for making apologies and for returning thanks. In the present instance the hurry with which the book has had to be written did not allow time enough to do many things which the writer would have liked to do. He would have liked to linger with the old-time enthusiasts who laid the foundations of the Society, to have made himself as familiar as possible with the times in which they lived and with the thoughts in their minds, so that he might be able to present to his readers a picture of their times as they saw them, and of their difficulties as they had to encounter them. For this there was no time, and so he has had to content himself with telling a plain, unvarnished tale of difficulties met and overcome, of a faith which refused to be dismayed, and of a triumph which is visible to all.

Unfortunately, there is no one alive to-day who had any active part in the inception of the Society. This increased the difficulty of presenting a true picture of the beginnings of the Society, but some help in this direction was got from the "Year Book," which had been written by Mr Lochrie in 1896. The writer is also very much indebted to Mr David



Brown, of the office staff of the Society, who prepared synopses of the various minutes of the Society. These synopses, by indicating the salient points in the minutes, greatly lightened the labour of selection ; but, in addition, every minute has been carefully read at least once, and many of them much oftener, so that complete accuracy might be secured.

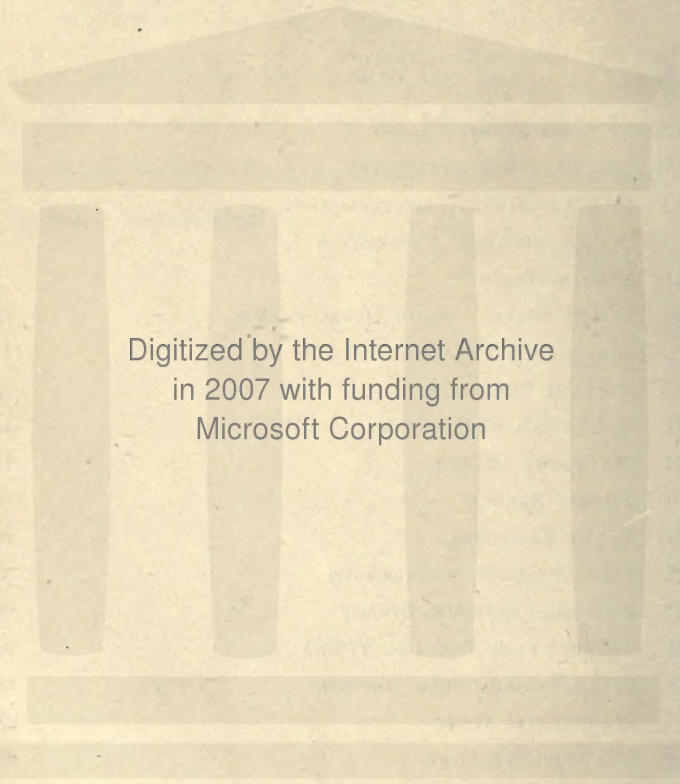
Great assistance in dealing with the history of the last thirty years has also been given by Mr James H. Forsyth, cashier of the Society, whose knowledge of the transactions of that period is unparalleled.

W. R.



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## CHAPTER I.

### SCOTLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.

GENERAL SOCIAL CONDITIONS—EARLY FARMING METHODS—POVERTY OF THE PEOPLE—MINERS AS SERFS—"THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE"—IMPROVING CONDITIONS: THE ACT OF UNION AND ITS EFFECTS—THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION—THE FACTORY SYSTEM: ITS EFFECT ON THE STATUS OF MEN.

THE conditions under which the people of Scotland lived during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were rude and uncouth, and, when judged by modern standards, could scarcely be described as other than appalling. In the few towns of any size, stone buildings were the rule; but in the rural districts the majority of the people lived in huts, the walls of which were built of sods and stones, and which were roofed with wattles and thatched with rushes. These huts were windowless save for a hole in the wall which admitted some air but very little light during the summer, and which was stuffed with rags and rushes during winter in order to keep out the snell North wind. The floor was but earth, hardened with the trampling of countless feet; and fireplace or chimney there was none, unless a few stones set in the middle of the floor or against one of the gables can be called a fireplace, and a hole in the roof, through which the smoke found its way after it had explored every nook and cranny of the house, a chimney.

Famine was an almost annual visitor. The majority of the people lived by agriculture, but the land was cold and undrained, and the methods of tilling were ineffective. The motive power was sometimes provided by oxen, but often the people harnessed themselves to the primitive implements. The result was that the grain grown was poor in quality and scanty in quantity, while often it failed to ripen because of the wetness of the [soil, and because, also, of lateness in sowing. The cattle were poor and underfed. Roots for feeding purposes were unknown until

near the end of the period ; there was no grain to spare, and little straw or hay for winter feeding, so that the poor brutes had to forage for themselves as best they could.

In the hall of the laird the position was a little better, but few of the lairds of that day could aspire to the standard of living of a moderately well-to-do farmer of to-day. Of food there was always enough in the hall, but it was coarse and unsavoury. Throughout the winter fresh meat was unknown. The cattle were killed in the autumn ; the meat was stored in brine barrels, and this brine-soaked meat, or swine flesh preserved in the same manner, was the only meat which found a place on the table of the laird during the winter months, except on the few occasions of great importance when one or two fowls were killed.

The farming class, if it be not a misnomer to call them farmers, usually lived in groups of such huts as are described above, and tilled their land more or less in common. The system chiefly in vogue was the " run rig " system, under which exchange of ground took place every year. The more important of their crude implements were also held in common, and as these could only be used by one person at a time—as, also, it was often well on in the spring before any thought of tillage occurred to them or the condition of their water-logged soil would permit of it, and as much time was often lost in deciding the rotation in the use of the implements—the return in the good years was only just sufficient for their wants. As the bad years were generally twice as numerous as the good years, the conditions of the rural workers were generally most miserable. Ill-treated Nature, receiving no encouragement from man save the " tickling of her face with a stick," refused to give of her bounty, and the people who depended on her for life suffered accordingly.

A condition of continual hunger was the lot of the labourers who had no land to till. They were often forced to depend for food on the roots and berries they could gather in the woods ; the scraps which went to feed the laird's pigs were luxuries which only came their way at long intervals. Work was intermittent ; it was poorly paid, for money was even scarcer than food. The only landless men who had what might be termed a decent living wage for the period were the miners. They received about a shilling a day ; but, in return, they sold themselves into



serfdom, for, from the beginning of the seventeenth century until the closing year of the eighteenth, no man, woman, or child who once entered a mine to work in it could leave it again. If the mine was sold the sale carried with it the right to their labour; they were bondslaves until death, the great emancipator, burst their shackles and set them free for ever.

On the large farms, which became more numerous during the eighteenth century, ploughmen received the truly magnificent salary of 35/ a year, with one or two perquisites, of which one was a pair of boots. The ploughman's daughter, if she went to the farm to assist the farmer's wife and daughters with the cows, received, as a reward for her labour, 13/4 a year, a piece of coarse cloth for an apron, and a pair of shoes.

In the towns the conditions were little better. In the early years of the eighteenth century a succession of bad years brought distress to all sections of the populace. There was much unrest, which was fanned into flame by the passing of the Act of Union in 1707, when a considerable amount of rioting took place in various parts of the country. In addition, the foreign trade of the country had been ruined by the English Navigation Act of 1660, which provided that all trade with the English Colonies should be carried in English ships alone.

In the closing years of the seventeenth century Paterson, the founder of the Bank of England, launched his Darien scheme, famous in history as "The South Sea Bubble," for the purpose of inaugurating a great world exchange and mart at the Isthmus of Panama. Scotsmen became responsible for £400,000 of the capital, and actually paid in £220,000. The jealousy of the English merchants, however, together with the fact that it had been proposed to establish a depot on land which was claimed by Spain, without having gone through the formality of consulting that country beforehand, handicapped the scheme from the outset. Nevertheless, although opposed by the English, and cold-shouldered by the Dutch, whose help they had hoped to enlist, the Scotsmen persevered with their project. A company, numbering 1,200, set out for their destination, landed, and erected a fort. Difficulties came fast, however. The King had not given his consent to the scheme, and the American colonists refused to have anything to do with them. Supplies gave out before the new crops were ready, and none were forthcoming

from home, so that at the end of eight months the colony was broken up. Out of a total of 2,500 persons who had left Scotland, not more than thirty ever reached home again. The failure of the scheme caused untold misery and ruin in Scotland, and did much to engender the bitter feelings toward the English which showed themselves when the union of the two Parliaments was being discussed ; but, worst of all, it bled the country white ; so much so that when, a few years later, the British Government called in the Scottish coinage in order to replace it with coinage of the United Kingdom, only coinage to the value of £400,000 was returned to Scotland.

#### IMPROVING CONDITIONS.

The Act of Union was exceedingly unpopular, but, as it turned out, it was not an unmixed evil, for it placed Scottish traders on the same footing as the English in respect to trading with the Colonies, from which they had been debarred for fifty years. It also gave Scottish ships free entry to English ports and Scottish goods free entry to English markets, and so marked the beginning of the increasing prosperity which has come to Scotland since then.

In particular the opening up of trade with the Southern Colonies had much to do with laying the foundation of the proud commercial position which Glasgow holds to-day. Merchants from the little town on the banks of the Clyde began to trade with these Colonies, bringing back in exchange for their wares tobacco and other products, including cotton. During the same period there was introduced from Holland the art of fine spinning, and on these two articles of Colonial produce—tobacco and cotton—were built up many fortunes. Later in the century the invention of the spinning jenny, the carding frame, and the power-loom, and the discovery by Watt of how to harness the power of steam to production all gave an impetus to the commercial growth of Scotland. With the application of the power of steam the foundation of Scotland's pre-eminent position in the manufacture of iron and steel and in the building of ships was laid, for by the application of steam-power to pumping machinery and to haulage it was found possible to keep her coal pits free from water and to dig vertical shafts to the coal seams.



Thus the eighteenth century, which had begun with the Scottish people in the direst poverty, ended with many of them in comparative comfort and with the standard of living for all definitely raised. Never since then, not even in the period of deep poverty which followed the close of the Napoleonic war nor in the "hungry 'forties," have the whole people fallen back into the depths of misery in which they were sunk at the beginning and all through the seventeenth century and well into the "'twenties" of the eighteenth. At times since then progress seemed to be at a standstill; at times it seemed even to be on the down grade; but the impetus has always been recovered; the standard of living has been rising gradually, and although we are still far removed from the rude profusion which has caused the century in English history which followed the "Black Death" to be spoken of as "the golden age of labour," the trend of our march is in the direction of a condition which, measured by the different standards of to-day, will approximate to that long past happy period.

#### THE FACTORY SYSTEM.

While it is admitted that the inventions and discoveries of Sir Joseph Arkwright (partner of David Dale at Lanark), Hargreaves, Crompton, and Cartwright revolutionised industry, and in the long run brought a higher standard of living to the people, yet the first results of their application were not wholly good. For centuries spinning and weaving had been carried on in the homes of the people, but with the invention of the spinning jenny, the carding frame, and the power-loom the weaving industry was removed to larger buildings. At first these were merely makeshifts. A disused stable or cowshed, any building, in fact, which would house a number of looms was good enough for the new industry. The hand-loom weavers soon found that they were unable to compete with the new methods. To make matters worse, where they did not themselves give up and take service under the new regime, their wives and their children did, and became competitors in driving the husbands and fathers out of the industry.

Soon the millowners discovered that in the new methods with the new cheap labour there was a mine of wealth and, their greed growing by what it fed on, they sought for even

cheaper labour than that of the poorly paid wage-slave women and children. This cheaper labour they found in the thousands of pauper children under the care of the supervisors of the poor. The story of the cruel treatment of these poor little mites, who were often chained to the frames of the looms and whipped to keep them awake, is one of the blackest pages in the whole history of the growth of the capitalist system in Great Britain.

In the weaving trades the entry of women and children changed the whole economy of the weavers' homes. Formerly the work had been done by the male members of the families, assisted to some extent by the women, but under the new system the factory owner found that he could get as much work done by the mother at a considerable reduction on the wages paid to her husband, and so the husband found himself workless. Then it was found that the children soon became as expert as their elders, and so a further reduction in wages took place.

The net result was that it became a case of equal pay for equal work, but the standard of pay was that of the women and not of the men, and soon the whole family had to work to provide the necessities of life for the home which should have been provided by the wages of the husband alone. Even to-day, while the women of the cotton mills who are members of their unions are probably the best paid female workers in the country, the standard for men is much below that for male workers in other trades; so that, in the case of the factory workers, "equal pay for equal work" has meant a general lowering of the standard of pay.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DAWN OF CO-OPERATION.

CO-OPERATION IN PREHISTORIC TIMES—EARLY TEUTONIC CO-OPERATION—THE SCOTTISH CLAN SYSTEM—THE PRESENT CO-OPERATIVE SYSTEM—FENWICK AND OTHER CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES—EARLY CO-OPERATIVE BAKERIES—THE GLASGOW BAKING SOCIETIES—EARLY METHODS OF CONTROLLING PRICES—STIRLINGSHIRE AND THE HILLFOOTS—BAKING SOCIETIES IN FIFE AND THE NORTH—CO-OPERATIVE BAKING IN THE BORDERLAND—GLASGOW SOCIETY—CO-OPERATIVE BAKING IN 1866—THE FIRST FEDERATED BAKERY.

THE Co-operative principle is as old as human intelligence. As soon as man became possessed of the first faint glimmerings of reason he began to seek communion with his fellows, and began, also, to take concerted action with them for mutual protection. It was natural that this should be so. The world must have been a terrible place for the human race in those early days. On land, in the sea, and in the air it was peopled with monsters, against whose attacks the unaided strength and skill of a solitary human were of no avail. Only by combination could he hope to survive. Results have proven that combination—Co-operation—is the law of life; that the men, the animals, the insects even which have learned to combine, have progressed in the scale of evolution; while the solitary monsters of past ages have disappeared, and are known only from a bone found here and a partially complete skeleton there.

That the human race gathered together in communities very early in its history there is abundance of evidence. In some of our cliffs there are caves which bear traces of human habitation; while scattered here and there over the world are immense mounds of shells, extending sometimes to a depth of many feet and acres in width, on what is believed to have been the seashore of prehistoric times, which show that, for a long period, these places were frequented by communities.

This community living has continued all down the ages. The "commune" system in vogue amongst the Teutonic races was



an imperfect system of Co-operative farming by an agricultural community, which finally ceased in Germany during the nineteenth century. It was introduced into this country by the invading Teuton races in the early centuries of the Christian era; and, with various modifications and adaptations, was still in being at the time of the Norman conquest. From that date it gradually declined, until, by the end of the sixteenth century, it had all but died out in England, but was still alive in parts of Scotland in the clan system. There the old community spirit continued to prevail until after the rebellion of 1745, when the common lands of the clans were given to the chiefs. In the lowlands, also, some trace of this principle continued to be visible amongst the farming community.

#### CO-OPERATION AS WE KNOW IT.

When or where Co-operation, in the sense in which the word is used to-day, first came into being there is no means of knowing. Mr Maxwell, in his "History of Co-operation in Scotland," tells the story of the old society originated by the weavers of Fenwick one hundred and fifty years ago, before Robert Owen was born; but, although this is the oldest Co-operative society of which any record remains, it by no means follows that others did not exist even earlier. Indeed, Mr Maxwell himself mentions that traditions of other old societies exist in various parts of the country. Of these, no records remain. It is only ten years since there vanished from the ken of the people of Govan a society which kept proudly painted over its door a record of the fact that it was established in 1777—eight years later than Fenwick. There still exists in Glasgow a society which dates back to the first year of the nineteenth century, and the Lennoxtown Society celebrated its centenary seven years ago. All over Scotland there exist societies which are nearing a century of life, and Mr Maxwell has rescued from oblivion the names, and sometimes part of the records, of others which long ago disappeared.

In their practice these old-time societies differed in material points from the practice which takes its name from the Lancashire weaving town where it originated—Rochdale—but the spirit which inspired those pioneers and the broad principles of self-help in Co-operation under which they worked, are the spirit

and principles of the Co-operators of to-day. They were, in fact, the spirit and principles which combine to make progress possible, and in the absence of which come stagnation and decay.

#### CO-OPERATIVE BAKERIES.

Like the inception of Co-operation itself, the beginnings of baking Co-operatively are lost in the misty past. Where the first Co-operative bakery was started, or when, there is no means of knowing.

Research has shown that, in the early years of last century, bread was being produced and distributed by Co-operative bakeries in Glasgow, but how many in number these bakeries were, where exactly they were situated, or what turnover they had it is not possible to discover ; indeed, it is probable that we should never have known of their existence, except as a tradition, had it not been for the fact that a Glasgow writer, who published in 1816 a book in two volumes dealing with the affairs of Glasgow, thought it necessary to defend the private bakers of the city at that time against any possible accusation of overcharging for bread, by describing the methods which were adopted by the Co-operative societies, and emphasising the fact that they sold bread at the cost of production, and only to their own members.

This Glasgow author, Mr Cleland by name, had been describing the means which had been taken by the Governments of George II. and George III. to regulate the price of bread in accordance with price of wheat. His description is very interesting, if only for the fact that it shows that steps had to be taken to regulate the exactions of the profiteer, even in those early days. It shows, also, that the methods of our various "Controllers," "Food Committees," etc., are not new, but are very much along the same lines as those devised to keep down the price of bread a century and a half ago. The price of bread was regulated in accordance with the price of wheat, and the baker was allowed a fixed sum per sack of flour for his expenses of baking and distributing.

In the various cities and towns the application of this Act was in the hands of the magistrates ; and, in Glasgow, bread prices were fixed at various intervals until 1800, when it was decided at the last Bread Court held to cease the practice, as,

in the opinion of the magistrates, such a course was unnecessary ; but the weight of loaves continued to be standardised at 4 lbs. 5 oz. 8 drams for the quartern loaf, and 2 lbs. 2 oz. 12 drams for the half-quartern loaf. In view of the price of bread to-day, it is interesting to note that the price of the half-quartern loaf was fixed by the last Glasgow Assize, held in 1800, at 10d. for fine wheaten bread and 7½d. for household bread, which was evidently of a much coarser and poorer quality.

Some of the Bread Assize regulations were peculiar. For instance, the baker had to produce eighty loaves from the sack of flour, and sell these eighty loaves at the exact price which they cost him, in accordance with the cost of flour. "As, however," says Mr Cleland, "they usually were able to get two loaves more from the sack, and these two loaves were clear profit, the price at which they were sold was a consideration." At the beginning of the nineteenth century the expenses per sack allowed to the bakers were 14/, but by 1816 this sum had been increased to 16/9.

It was within the right of any two bakers to call the attention of the magistrates to the fact that the price of bread or flour had risen or fallen, and to offer proof. When this was done the magistrates or Justices of the Peace were obliged to take evidence as to the current prices, and, if they found any variation from the last price fixed, "they shall immediately set a new price, which shall remain unaltered until a new Assize has been held." One wonders whether the magistrates of those days were as difficult to convince that any alteration was necessary as have been the Food Control officials during the last year of the war.

"In 1801 no Assize was held, and it was left to the bakers to sell bread at such price as they could afford." It is probable that in the results of this decision the reason for the starting of Co-operative societies is to be found, for human nature and the practices of the times being what they were, we may be sure that the bakers saw to it that, however much their profits might increase, they did not go down at all.

Mr Cleland goes on to say :—

"During the last fifteen years, when no Assize has been fixed in Glasgow, the bakers have uniformly proportioned the price of bread to the price of wheat, similarly to what it would have been had the Assize been sitting. There are instances, however, of individual



bakers selling their bread somewhat lower than the general run of the trade ; and baking societies have been established in the suburbs who uniformly sell their bread one penny, twopence, and sometimes even threepence on the quartern loaf lower than the bakers' price. These societies do not sell their bread to anyone but their own members ; they give no credit and receive neither profit from the concern nor interest on their capital ; besides, the members are subjected to the risk of loss incident to the breach of trust in their servants. The greater part of these societies make no household or coarse bread, and no loaf less than quartern ; by which arrangement it is evident the lower classes are excluded, as they neither can advance their share of capital nor at all times purchase a quartern loaf. Moreover, the bakeries belonging to these societies being all situated outside the royalty, the flour is exempt from 'multures,' a tax to which the flour baked within the royalty is subject, amounting to one eighty-fourth of the whole. As the Assize laws wisely determined (for the sake of the lower classes of the people) that bread shall be baked from a peck loaf down to a quarter-quartern loaf, in exact proportion, and that the twopenny and penny loaves shall be of a weight exactly corresponding to the price of the quartern loaf, it is evident that the person who manufactured the small and the coarse bread, from which the labouring classes of the community are generally supplied, all bearing the same proportion to the wheaten quartern loaf, cannot sell so cheap as the societies ; among other reasons because the additional labour is very considerable, and in weighing out the aliquot parts, unless some allowance is made in the dough, the small bread will be deficient in weight when it comes out of the oven ; besides, the regular baker must support his family, pay his business, and pay local taxes ; he has also to run the risk attending credit, and frequently to give one penny to the shilling discount to chandlers who retail his bread."

The above is the sum of our knowledge of these early Glasgow baking societies, but the fact that they were able to sell their bread a penny to threepence per quartern loaf below the prices charged by the private bakers, at a time when the quartern loaf cost  $1/8$  and  $1/3$ , is significant. It meant that the baker was getting from  $6/8$  to  $20/$  per sack of flour over the cost of production of the societies, and that, therefore, the cost to the consumer was extortionate. Doubtless, also, the conditions which led to the formation of Co-operative societies in Glasgow prevailed elsewhere, and it is quite likely that baking societies existed at that early date in other parts of Scotland, had their day, and passed out of existence without a trace remaining. Even of those of the existence of which we do know particulars are absent ; in most cases the name alone remains, and often not even that but only a tradition.

## STIRLINGSHIRE AND HILLFOOTS SOCIETIES.

Early in the nineteenth century Co-operation found a home in Stirlingshire. In the thirtieth year of the century the Bannockburn Co-operative Society came into being as the result of a lecture on "Co-operation," which was given by Mr William Buchanan, a resident medical man. So impressed were members of his audience with what they had heard that a committee was formed immediately to draft rules and take the steps necessary for the formation of a society. The rules were agreed to at a meeting which was held on 27th November 1830. Bannockburn Society still exists and flourishes to-day, after an unbroken career of eighty-nine years.

About the same time—it may have been earlier or a little later, for no information about its beginning can be found—a baking society was formed in Bannockburn, and continued to flourish for a number of years. Of the fact that the members of the other Bannockburn Society were interested in the doings of the baking society evidence is given in a minute of that society in the early 'thirties, in which it is noted that the baking society had agreed to supply Alva Society with bread. Incidentally, this entry would seem to fix a period at which the Alva Baking Society was not in existence. The Bannockburn Baking Society was amalgamated with the Bannockburn Society in 1846.

In the year 1847 one of the most flourishing baking societies in the country came into existence, for on the 23rd June in that year the Bainsford and Grahamston Baking Society was formed. Notwithstanding that general societies have grown up all round the town of Falkirk, this society continues to maintain a separate and flourishing existence, its latest balance-sheet showing a membership of 4,733 and an average output of 371 sacks per week.

Other baking societies were formed in the same district. Quite recently one of these, Stenhousemuir Baking Society, was amalgamated with the Stenhousemuir Equitable Society, after a separate existence of many years. Another baking society was situated in the little village of Carronshore. In the Hillfoots district some time in the late 'forties baking societies came into existence at Alva and Tillicoultry. The baking society at Tillicoultry amalgamated with the Tillicoultry Society

in 1905, and the Alva Society with the Alva Bazaar Society a few years later.

#### BAKING SOCIETIES IN FIFE AND THE NORTH.

In Fifeshire, also, baking societies were coming into being; indeed, the earliest baking society whose name is known was formed at Leven in 1828. In 1840 Kingskettle Baking Society was formed, and it remains strong and vigorous to-day. It is one of the few of these early baking societies about which it is possible to give a little information. The society was only a small affair at the beginning; indeed it is not very large even to-day; but what it lacked in size it made up for in vigour, and since its formation it has never looked back. It is recorded that in its early days the bread was delivered by the aid of a donkey cart; to-day the society has several vans on the road and supplies a population of several thousands with bread.

Somewhat earlier than the formation of the society in Kingskettle a baking society was formed in the village of Leslie, situated a few miles from Kirkcaldy. The reason for its formation was the same as that responsible for the formation of others in these early days—small wages and the extortionate charges for their bread made by the local bakers. The success which attended the baking venture led in 1840 to the formation of a general society. In later years this society split over the question of adopting the Rochdale system of disposing of the surpluses, and a new society was formed which continues strong and vigorous; and with this new society the baking society finally amalgamated. Later still a society was formed in Dunfermline, which in 1866 showed a surplus on working of £493.

Meantime Co-operation was going ahead in the North. Societies had been formed in Kirriemuir, Brechin, Arbroath, and Forfar, and very early in its history Kirriemuir took up the baking of bread. Arbroath West Port Association began the baking of bread in 1846, while in the year immediately preceding—1845—Arbroath Guthrie Port Association, in altering their rules, placed first in the list of the objects of the society “to make bread and to deal in bread,” so that it is evident that the society was then baking or had baking in contemplation. This is the society which is now known by the name of Arbroath Equitable Society.



## BAKING IN THE BORDERLAND.

Co-operation does not seem to have found a footing in the South quite as early as it did in the North and West, but the Borderers were not far behind, and they have proved that having once started they believed in perseverance. It was in 1839 that Galashiels Store Company was formed, and the question of bread supply was soon under consideration. In its earliest years the society seems to have had considerable difficulty in getting a satisfactory supply of bread, with the result that by 1844 they had established a bakery of their own. An interesting fact which is related by Mr Maxwell in his "History of Scotland" is that they applied for information about baking to two societies, long disappeared, Coupar Angus and Alyth. Probably some one connected with the society was a native of Forfarshire, and, knowing that these societies had bakeries, suggested that information be got from them. The number of these efforts to cheapen the staff of life must have been very great, for references to them keep cropping up in old newspapers and pamphlets, showing that Co-operative activity, much of it inspired doubtless by the teachings of Owen, was widespread in Scotland.

Hawick Store Company began a few months later than the Galashiels venture, but it was not until 1851 that the members added baking to the list of their enterprises.

## GLASGOW SOCIETY.

Turning again to Glasgow, where the first Co-operative bakeries of which there is any record were established, we find that many attempts had been made in the interval to establish Co-operative trading on a firm foundation, but in vain. How many of these early Co-operative failures were due to the fact that the surpluses accruing from the trading transactions were divided in proportion to the capital held, without any regard being paid to the trade done with the society by the holders of the capital, it is not possible to say, but the system was bound to have a disturbing effect on the minds of those members who, although too poor to invest much capital, were loyal purchasers from the store.

However that may be, after a lecture by Holyoake, a fresh

attempt to establish Co-operation in the city was made, and for a time the new venture seemed to flourish, only to perish eventually like its predecessors. What makes this society interesting at this point is that of it is recorded the fact that it possessed "a modern baking department," and is said to have supplied the neighbouring societies with bread. The society came to an end in 1865, and with it ended Co-operative baking in the city for the time being. When next we hear of it it is in a new, and as it turned out, a stabler and more permanent form.

At this point it may be interesting to note some particulars of the Co-operative baking societies in existence in Scotland in 1866, as taken from the returns sent in to the Registrar of Friendly Societies in Scotland. It is probable that the list is far from complete, and it takes no account of the societies having bakeries of their own who dealt in other goods as well. These societies were:—

|                                | Value<br>of Property. | Profits. |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Airdrie Bread.....             | No property.          | £252     |
| Alva Baking.....               | £1,184                | 331      |
| Bainsford and Grahamston ..... | 1,484                 | 788      |
| Coatbridge Bread .....         | 857                   | 466      |
| Dalry Baking .....             | 20                    | 50       |
| Dunfermline Baking .....       | 116                   | 493      |
| Edinburgh Bread .....          | 422                   | 271      |
| Leven Baking .....             | 200                   | 120      |
| Roslin Baking .....            | —                     | 82       |
| Stenhousemuir Baking .....     | 782                   | 350      |

A notable absentee from the above list is the name of Kingskettle Baking Society.

#### THE FIRST FEDERATED BAKERY.

As it was in Ayrshire, in the little village of Fenwick, that, so far as is known, the first Co-operative society was established, so also to Ayrshire belongs the honour of having established the first federated bakery. Co-operation in Fenwick had died in 1801 with the demise of the old Meal Society, and it was not until 1840, when Darvel Industrial Society was founded, that it again secured a footing in the land of Burns. The society founded 79 years ago continues to flourish, but for the first twenty years it had to flourish alone. Then, in 1860, Kilmarnock Society was founded, and following it there came in quick succession Crosshouse, Auchinleck, Mauchline, Galston,

Newmilns, and Catrine. In 1867 five of these societies—Kilmarnock, Crosshouse, Galston, Mauchline, and Newmilns—combined to form a baking society, while three other societies—Troon, Catrine, and Darvel—although not members, took bread from the federation. In 1870 premises were built for the federation, and the trade increased steadily. Gradually, however, the more distant societies began to erect bakeries of their own, and in the early 'nineties of last century the bakery was taken over by Kilmarnock Society, who erected a new and up-to-date bakery for themselves on the site of the old one.





COBURG STREET PREMISES



ST JAMES STREET PREMISES



M'NEIL STREET PREMISES (1886-1890)



M'NEIL STREET PREMISES (1890-1894).

## CHAPTER III.

### THE FIRST YEAR.

GLASGOW IN THE 'SIXTIES—THE SOCIETY FORMED—MEN WHO WROUGHT—  
THE FIRST BAKERY—STARTING BUSINESS—A DISASTER AVOIDED—  
BETTER PROSPECTS—A MANAGER APPOINTED—LARGER PREMISES  
WANTED—SOMETHING ATTEMPTED, SOMETHING DONE.

IN the 'sixties of last century Glasgow was not a pleasant place for working men to live in. The city was contained in the four parishes of Barony, City, Govan, and Gorbals; only a small proportion of its population being resident in the last-named parish, however. The conditions of life for the workers were not good. Houses were small and inconvenient, disease was rampant, and poverty the common lot. There were 87,604 inhabited houses in the city in the year 1864, and of these 35,788 were rented at £5 per annum, or under; the average rental being £3, 7s. 3d. Other 35,393 houses had rentals of between £5 and £10, the average rental being £6, 17s. 3d., and the average rental of these 71,181 houses, forming 81·75 per cent. of the total housing accommodation of the city, was £5, 5s. per annum. Further light is thrown on the housing conditions by the fact that, while the aggregate rental for these 71,181 houses was £373,441, the aggregate rental for the remaining 16,423 houses was £502,687; an average rental per house of £30, 10s. The proportions of these lowly-rented houses were fairly equal in all four parishes, and even when allowance is made for the fact that rents were much lower in those days than they have been in recent years for similar accommodation it is evident that the housing conditions left much to be desired, and that the "homes of the people" must have been veritable hotbeds of disease. In the statistics consulted the proportion of one-apartment houses is not given, but in view of the whole-hearted condemnation of such houses voiced by Dr. Russell, Medical Officer of Health for Glasgow, twenty years later, and



the large proportion of Glasgow's citizens who were then living in houses which were kitchen, parlour, bedroom, and washhouse all in one, it is easy to believe that the houses of the earlier period were no better than the low rentals would warrant.

Further evidence of the correctness of this assumption is found in the vital statistics of the period. In 1864 the deaths of children under five years of age were 46·93 per cent. of the total deaths; in 1862 they had been 48·85 per cent. of the total. In those years the children were dying at the rate of one in every nine of the population, a deathrate nearly equal to that of the British Army during the four years of war. The effects of poverty and bad housing on the health of the population were further evidenced by the number of deaths of children under five from tubercular diseases. In 1863 these were 381; in 1864, 378; while the total deaths from tuberculosis were 1562 and 1763 respectively for the same years. In his report to the Corporation for the year 1864, Mr Watson, Town Chamberlain, points out that there was ample scope in the statistics he had compiled for showing the need for benevolence "in alleviating the character of the dwellings of the very poor," and he urged the need which existed to provide other and better houses. At the same time he notes that employment generally was good in this year. In 1868, 786 children under five died from consumption, and in 1869 the total infantile deathrate (children under one year) was 48·20 per 1,000. In the Clyde area it was 56·81 per 1,000.

It was in a city in which the conditions of the people were such as the figures quoted above reveal that, on the last Monday in January 1869, what was destined in the course of fifty years to become the largest business of its kind in the world opened its doors for trade. For six years the idea of the federation of Co-operative societies for trading purposes had been occupying the minds of the Co-operators of Scotland, keenly interested as they were in the progress of the North of England Co-operative Wholesale Society. Only a little over two years before, also, those of them in the West who took an interest in the affairs of their Co-operative neighbours had seen the Co-operative societies of Ayrshire join together to form a baking association for the purpose of supplying themselves with bread; and in September 1868 the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society

had been safely launched, after several years of anxious consultation and consideration. No sooner had the S.C.W.S. been sent on its way than the stalwarts of the West turned their attention to yet another venture. Since the collapse of the second Glasgow Society there had been no Co-operatively-produced bread in the city. The price which was being charged for bread by the private bakers was considered too high, and yet not one of the societies thought itself strong enough to finance a bakery of its own.

They had faith in the Co-operative principle, however, and what they could not do as individuals they fancied they would be able to do in combination. They reasoned that, if a number of people by combining together could procure the goods they needed more cheaply than any one of them alone could do, there was no good reason why a number of societies by combining together could not do what no one of them acting alone was strong enough to do.

It is to Mr Gabriel Thomson of St Rollox Society, then treasurer of the newly-formed S.C.W.S., that the honour of first bringing the idea of a federated bakery publicly before the co-operators of the West belongs. The first idea was that the work should be undertaken by the recently-formed Wholesale Society, but a little consideration showed that this plan was hardly feasible. It was thought that it would scarcely be right to adventure the capital of societies scattered all over Scotland in an undertaking from which many of them could not possibly derive any direct benefit, and so this idea was dropped, and finally it was decided to start a federated baking society.

In the new venture St Rollox Society was the prime mover. In those days the men who controlled St Rollox Society believed in the infinite possibilities of the application of Co-operative principles. They were joined with other Glasgow societies in a drapery federation. They took up shares in the St Rollox Cooperage Society, in the Ironworks, and in the Oakmill Society, each as it arose, and to Co-operation they looked for escape from the exactions of the master bakers of Glasgow. A meeting was convened by them in the month of October 1868, and to that meeting Mr Gabriel Thomson read a paper on "Federation," in which he dealt at length with the principle as it could be applied to the baking of bread. This paper so strongly

influenced the delegates that there and then they approved of the principle, and went back to their societies to report. In a few weeks another meeting was called, which was attended by representatives from Barrhead, St Rollox, Paisley Provident, Paisley Equitable, Glasgow Eastern, Anderston, Parkhead, Johnstone, Howwood, Glasgow Southern, Motherwell, Lennoxtown, and others. At this meeting the proposal was discussed further, and at the close the delegates pledged themselves to go back to their societies and do all in their power to get these to take part in the formation of the federation.

#### THE SOCIETY FORMED.

A third meeting was held a fortnight later, and at this meeting eight societies intimated their willingness to join in forming the Federation. These were Anderston, Barrhead, Cathcart, Johnstone, Lennoxtown, Motherwell, St Rollox, and Thornliebank. An interim committee was formed, consisting of Messrs Gabriel Thomson and John West (St Rollox), James Borrowman and Alexander Douglas (Anderston), James Ferguson and Alexander Johnstone (Barrhead), and Joseph Gibb and Donald Cameron (Thornliebank). Three of their number—Messrs Thomson, Borrowman, and Cameron—were appointed a sub-committee to look out for suitable premises, consider the working of the bakery and the delivery of the bread, and report to a future meeting.

No better men could have been selected for the task. Mr Thomson was the originator of the scheme, and was also the treasurer of the S.C.W.S. Mr Borrowman had already made a name for himself as the most powerful advocate of Co-operation that Scotland had produced. He had taken a leading part in establishing the S.C.W.S., and was now its manager; while Mr Cameron was not only a shrewd and earnest Co-operator, but appears also to have had some knowledge of the baking trade. We can well imagine the zeal and earnestness with which they set about their task. They knew that they were setting out on a journey along an untrodden path, but they had a faith which lighted up the dark places before them, and a determination to see the mission on which they had entered, the first step to the fulfilment of their hopes, accomplished as soon as possible. Inside two weeks they were back to the



parent committee, their task accomplished, bringing with them particulars of a bakehouse which they thought would suit the requirements of the new society, a scheme for carrying on the business, and particulars about methods of delivery. Their report was approved, the bakery at 52 South Coburg Street was leased, and instructions were given for its immediate repair.

The minute of committee, the first minute of the new Society, is as follows :—

*“ 16th January 1869.*

“ A meeting was convened to-day to hear the report of the committee in the office of the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society. At this meeting the following societies were represented—Barrhead, St Rollox, Anderston, Eastern, Motherwell, Dalziel, Cadder, and Thornliebank. A report was submitted by the committee stating that premises had been secured and that they were convinced that the business would pay well, and recommended an immediate start. The report was accepted and the following sub-committee was appointed to carry out the resolution—viz., Gabriel Thomson, president; John West, treasurer; James Borrowman, secretary; and Alexander Douglas. Same committee to get the rules printed in accordance with the alterations made on the Ayrshire United Co-operative Societies Baking Association, and submit the same to the general meeting of the delegates before registration.”

All that now remained to be done was to get the bakery into working order, and ten days sufficed to have this work completed. Meantime, however, the committee were not idle. Vans had to be procured and other details of the work inside and outside seen to, and bakers had to be employed. The committee met on 23rd January, and appointed a Mr Currie as foreman baker, while on 6th February they decided to purchase a second van at a cost of £18 and a horse for a similar sum. A vanman was also engaged at a wage of 20/ a week.

These little details are all in the minutes, but no mention of the situation of the bakery appears therein, nor is there any mention made of the date of beginning business. These old-time Co-operators were so engrossed in the work they were doing that they had no thought for the people who would come after them, eager for information about what they had done and how they had done it. It would appear from the minute book itself that it was written up at a date later than the beginning of the Society, probably from notes made by Mr Borrowman at the time, and this may account for the omission

of any mention of the date of beginning business or of the location of the bakery.

We know, however, that the bakery was situated in South Coburg Street, a street which connected Bedford Street with Norfolk Street, parallel with and immediately behind Eglinton Street. The buildings in this street are evidently much older than those of Eglinton Street. The site of the first premises of the U.C.B.S. is now covered by a part of the Coliseum theatre. Here, in this small place, the modest beginning was made on the morning of 26th January 1869. One is curious as to the quantity turned out in this first baking, but that is a matter on which all records are silent. Occasionally we are told of the purchase of flour and of the price which was paid for it, but for some time no mention is made of the quantity baked into bread. At that time the secretary was a very busy man. Not only was he during these first few months virtual manager of the bakery, but he was also the manager of the S.C.W.S., and he had his hands full of work.

Although the minutes are silent on some phases of the work of the committee, however, they are prolix enough on others. The wages of the vanman are given, and at the same meeting—that of 6th February—we are told that the wages of the foreman baker were fixed at 34/ a week. It was also agreed at the same meeting that the bread be sold at current retail price and that a discount of 10 per cent. be given. Three weeks later the need for a larger van was being discussed, and at the next meeting, held a week later, it was decided that a Parkhead vanbuilder be given the order to build a van large enough to contain fifty dozen loaves; and that another horse be purchased. A shop in connection with the bakery had now been opened, and it was decided that the shop hours should be from eight a.m. until seven p.m. The question of a weekly half-holiday, presumably for the girl in the bread shop, was also considered, but allowed to lie over. From the next minute it becomes evident that the committee's idea of the class of horse which was required for the work of the Society had undergone some change during their month's experience, for whereas the first horse which they purchased cost £18, they paid £40 for the next one.

At the beginning of the month the hours of the shop girl

had been fixed at from eight to seven, but on the 27th of the same month an alteration was made, and it was agreed that the shop should open at 7.30 in the morning and remain open until 7.30 at night. On Mondays it was to be shut at 5 p.m. and on Saturdays to remain open until 9 p.m., while the price of bread was fixed at 5½d. The committee were now finding that they required stable and van room more than they had available, and agreed to advertise for it. Evidently the shop girl found the 7.30 a.m. start too early for her, for at a meeting of the committee held a fortnight after the earlier opening of the shop had been decided on, the minute records that she should "be spoken to about attending at her hour in the morning."

#### DIFFICULTIES BEGIN.

By this time the members of the committee were beginning to realise that there were difficulties in running a baking business. Complaints had been made that the bread was sour, and the foreman baker laid the blame on a change of temperature. The explanation was quite likely to be the correct one, although a foreman with an interest in his work might have been expected to take precautions against such difficulties. The committee were not long in discovering that this was just what their foreman did not do. At the next meeting his attention was again called to complaints about the bread. This time it was being sent out to the shops in a dirty condition. He was also informed that the blend of flours which he was using was costing too much, and the committee decided that they should draft a statement of the proportions in which the differently priced flours were to be used. It was also decided to dismiss one of the vanmen on the ground that he was careless about his work and his horse.

In the case of the baker matters went from bad to worse until, an earlier historian\* tells us, he struck work altogether. The committee for some time had been in constant fear that some morning the ovens would be found cold, or else that the bread would be burnt black, and the crisis came when, at 11 p.m. one Thursday toward the end of May, the president was aroused from sleep to receive the intelligence that the Baking Society had given up business. This was serious news ;

\* The United Co-operative Society Year Book, 1896.



but sure enough, when he had hurriedly dressed himself and made his way with all speed to Coburg Street, he found the bakery in darkness. Mr Borrowman was next awakened, and told the doleful tidings. Both gentlemen hurried to the foreman's house to discover that happy-go-lucky individual soundly asleep, careless that hungry Co-operators would be breadless in the morning. He was induced to go to work, and next day the committee were hastily summoned, only to discover that the foreman was tired of his job, and had fully made up his mind that he was going to be responsible no longer for supplying Co-operators with the staff of life. The committee were at their wits end, but there was nothing for it but to get another baker. Here the minutes take up the story. The committee at their meeting spoke to the foreman about the loss on the first quarter's working, which amounted to £37. His reply was to the effect that he never expected to make a profit the first quarter. They then spoke to him of the numerous complaints which were being received with reference to the quality of the bread, and he replied that as he was unable to do better the best thing he could do was to resign. His resignation was accepted, and after very considerable difficulty another man was found to take his place ; but he only remained a week or two, and ultimately, in June, another man was procured who was able to do better. No balance-sheet was printed for any of the quarters in the first year, but a written statement, showing the position of the Society, was sent to each member. The first quarterly meeting was held on 29th May, when the rules were adopted. Mr Gabriel Thomson was elected president ; Mr John West (St Rollox Society), treasurer ; Mr James Borrowman (Anderston Society), secretary ; and Messrs James Ferguson (Barrhead), Joseph Gibb (Thornliebank), Alexander Douglas (Anderston), and Weir (Motherwell) as committee. It was also agreed that the secretary be paid £1, 10s. and the treasurer £2 quarterly.

With the appointment of a new foreman the bakery was now running more smoothly than during the first quarter, but it was not yet paying its way, for the minute of 29th June records the fact that the loss at that date was £25. The explanation of this position, as given by the secretary, was that a liability of £4, 15s. had not been taken into account at

the last balance, some flour which had been bought had not been used when the price fell, and this had entailed a loss of £6, 10s. An encouraging feature, however, was a report given by the new foreman which showed that a profit had been made in each of the two weeks with which it dealt. The sales were also rising, but the committee were not satisfied with the trade the Society was doing, and were desirous that the turnover should be raised to sixty sacks or seventy sacks a week, as they thought that with such a turnover they would have a good profit. As a preliminary step to securing this turnover they determined to send out several of their number as missionaries to societies which had not yet joined, with the object of getting them to do so, or, at least, to purchase their bread from the Society. Amongst other minor difficulties with which the committee were being faced at this time was the lack of suitable stabling for their horses. Their stable was too small, and it was unhealthy. It is true that horses were not very costly, but neither was money too plentiful, and they could not afford to run any risks. One of the horses which they had bought in the beginning of the year was ill, and had to be sold for £6. A decline of £12 in the value of a horse inside a few months was evidence that there was something wrong somewhere, but suitable stabling was difficult to secure.

#### A MANAGER APPOINTED.

In the minutes the most important things sometimes crop up in the most casual manner. At a meeting of the committee which was held on 18th September, one of the principal themes of the evening's discussion was the purchasing of new horses. A horse was to be returned as unsuitable, and another horse priced at £30 was to be taken on trial, as it would not suit the committee that anything should be paid to the owner as "rue bargain." Then, quite casually, the minute goes on to mention that "the engaging of Mr Sturrock as manager of the Baking Society was then gone into." This is the first mention made in the minutes of the proposal to appoint a manager; but, from the document which had been prepared and which was transcribed into the minute of the meeting, it is evident that the subject had been under consideration for some time. It is interesting to note in this agreement that "the manager was

not to exceed 3/ for baking and firing." He was to determine "the quality and also the maker's flour he shall use, but the committee reserve the right to prevent the price of flour used any week exceeding the average price of extra flour." He was to keep the accounts of the Society, and prepare weekly statements which would give

"the number of sacks baked and also the cost of the flour and other materials, wages, rent, cost of horsekeep, etc., giving the total of the whole, with a statement of the number of loaves baked from each sack, the total number of dozens of loaves produced, with smallbread; also the cash value of the loaves and smallbread added and the expense with the cost deducted, showing clear profit; also a statement showing the number of dozens of loaves and smallbread sent to each society, with the number left on hand at the end of each week."

The pay of the manager was fixed at 35/ per week until the Society was able to pay a bonus of sixpence per £, when his wages were to be advanced to 40/ per week.

Already the directors were beginning to find that if it was difficult to sell as much bread as they desired, it was equally difficult sometimes to get payment for the bread they did sell. There was hardly one of the Glasgow societies but had to struggle hard to keep going at all. Of all those societies in the city to which the new venture must look for its best support there were not more than two which emerged safely from the struggles of those early days, and those two survived only because the men in charge of them refused to recognise defeat and kept going even against the advice of the friends who foresaw in a longer struggle but greater disaster. Of the eight societies which had joined in the formation of the Federation only two were pursuing smoothly the even tenor of their way, free from the irritating worries produced by the difficulty of making ends meet. These two societies—Thornliebank and Barrhead—were associated with the Bakery from the very first meeting, and being successful they were in a position to pay their way promptly; but some of the others were not so fortunate, and so, in October of the first year, we find the manager being instructed by the committee to write to the societies and point out to them that as the capital was limited it would be an advantage if payment was made promptly when the accounts were rendered. Frequently during the next few



years the same complaint crops up, and there were times when the Society was owing the S.C.W.S. large sums of money which at the moment it was quite unable to pay because of the fact that the societies were not paying promptly for the goods they received.

The third quarterly meeting took place on 4th December. Although there is nothing about it in earlier minutes, a hint is given that the committee or the manager had not been keeping to the strict line of instructions given at the August quarterly meeting, for a motion is agreed to "that the alteration in the price of bread take place on the same day as the Glasgow prices." A profit had been made on the quarter's transactions, but it was not large enough to divide, and the delegates gave authority to the committee "to apply it to redeem fixed stock." About this time the Society was having trouble with the quality of flour purchased. The flour was returned, and the manager was authorised to cancel the order if that sent in exchange was not of better quality. The committee at the close of their first year were discussing the necessity of getting more ovens, as the old bakery was quite inadequate to meet the trade which was being done. It was agreed to endeavour to get other two ovens; and, failing that solution of the difficulty, to see if a nightshift could be employed. Later minutes are silent as to how the difficulty was overcome during the three months which elapsed ere the new bakery in St James Street, Kinning Park, was ready for occupation.

#### SOMETHING ATTEMPTED, SOMETHING DONE.

During the first year the committee had been feeling their way. They had met and overcome many difficulties, some of which, like the incident of the chairman and secretary hunting up a recalcitrant baker in the small hours of the morning in order to induce him to go to work, have a humorous enough aspect when viewed at a distance of fifty years, but must have seemed tragic to the actors, for the whole future of the infant venture would seem bound up in an unbroken sequence of bread deliveries. For the first year the committee met in the premises of the S.C.W.S. in Madeira Court. Usually the meeting place was the warehouse, for the room in which Mr Borrowman worked was but small, although it possessed the only window

in the place. There they fitted up a temporary table, using boxes for seats. Indeed, so long as Mr Borrowman continued secretary of the Baking Society, the committee continued to meet frequently in the Wholesale's premises, although the sub-committee usually met in a small room, 10 ft. by 6 ft., fitted up in the bakery premises at St James Street. At times the full committee of sixteen met here also, packed together like herrings. Such were the conditions to which those heroes of the Co-operative vanguard accommodated themselves in order that the cause they had at heart might prosper.

During the first year the Society had baked 2,116 sacks of flour, equivalent to an average turnover of  $40\frac{3}{4}$  sacks per week ; but as the turnover during the latter part of the year was approximately 70 sacks per week, it must have been much less than 40 at the beginning. For the first six months losses amounting to £62, 10s. had been made, but in the second six months these losses had been wiped out, the fittings had been depreciated by over £30, and although no dividend was declared they had a balance of surplus to carry forward which amounted to £23, 3s. 1d. The value of the goods sold during the year had been £5,081, 13s. 6d. ; the value of the fixed and live stock was £243, 15s. 8d. ; and the value of their building, as shown in the balance-sheet, £110, 9s. 6d. The societies held share capital amounting to £193, 12s. and loan capital amounting to £145, and £10, 6s. 1d. had been paid as interest. Thus the position was quite good. The corner had been turned ; a surplus was being shown most weeks, and the directors were assured that with careful nursing and a steady influx of trade prosperity was in sight. Many rocky headlands had yet to be weathered, many shoals avoided, adverse winds and tides overcome, ere their bark reached the wide open sea of prosperity ; but the mariners were shrewd and careful, and although for one reason and another several changes of captain and even of crew took place, the new crews and the new captains sailed their ship always with the skill of the old and, successfully overcoming all difficulties, were at last wafted by fair winds over a smooth sea.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ST JAMES STREET BAKERY.

A HINDRANCE TO THE PROGRESS OF THE SOCIETY—THE SEARCH FOR NEW PREMISES—THE NEW BAKERY—RUNNING INTO DEBT—THE CHAIRMAN RETIRES—MORE CAPITAL WANTED—SLOW PROGRESS—THE MANAGER RESIGNS—JOINING THE WHOLESALE SOCIETY—PAYMENT OF BONUS COMMENCED—MR BARCLAY RESIGNS—ADDITIONAL PROPERTY PURCHASED—MR CAMERON RESIGNS—MR ANDREW BROWN BECOMES CHAIRMAN—BAD BREAD AND DELIVERY DIFFICULTIES—FURTHER EXTENSIONS—MONEY DIFFICULTIES—MR BORROWMAN RETIRES—BECOMING BISCUIT AGENTS.

LONG before the end of the first year of their tenancy of Coburg Street bakery the committee had come to the conclusion that if their business was to grow and flourish they must remove to more suitable premises at the earliest possible moment. As one of themselves put it, they discussed "the present bakery as a hindrance to the progress of the Society." The result of this discussion was that a circular was issued to the societies, in which the committee recommended the building of a new bakery. During the months of October and November 1869 the question was discussed on several occasions, and at least two special meetings of the committee were held for its consideration. At the second of these, held on 6th November, a sub-committee was appointed to look out for a site, and a week later it was decided to write to Mr M'Kay, of Alva, asking his advice on the subject. There is no doubt that the matter was urgent. The trade was growing rapidly, and there were numerous complaints regarding late delivery of bread. The subject crops up in the minutes again and again, and the manager is unable to get out enough bread early in the day to meet the demand.

Still, the committee are cautious. They have now discovered that the Society can be made a success; they have also gained some knowledge of the difficulties which are to be



encountered ; and so, not content with applying to the Alva Baking Society for information, they also get into communication with the Dunfermline Baking Society, and receive a letter in which that society's bakery is described. Meantime, the sub-committee appointed to look out for a site had not been idle. They had discovered a building at the corner of St James Street and Park Street, Kinning Park, which was for sale, and which they thought could be so altered as to make suitable premises for the Society and, after due consideration doubtless and careful inspection, although the minutes are silent on the subject, the matter was brought before the December quarterly meeting and purchase was approved of, provided the cost was not more than £400.

#### THE NEW PREMISES.

The building was purchased at once, and steps were immediately taken to have it fitted up as a bakery. It was decided to erect four ovens at an estimated cost of £210 for the four, while a part of the building was fitted up as a stable. To-day, the fitting up of a bakery of this size would seem quite a small matter and not at all a thing to make a fuss over, but it is easy, nevertheless, to imagine the loving care with which those o.d veterans watched the transformation which was taking place ; how they deliberated over the merits of asphalt as a satisfactory material for the floor, and the utility of cast-iron fittings as against wooden ones for the stable. The manager made a special journey to Irvine to arrange at the quarry there for proper stones for the oven soles, what time the sub-committee were arranging to get estimates for tables and troughs for the bakery. By the end of January the manager was able to announce that the stable was finished, and was instructed to employ a man to take charge of it and attend to the horses. At the same meeting it was agreed that the S.C.W.S. be allowed stabling for a horse and van, and that they pay a fair share of the expenses. Already, too, the new bakery was so far advanced towards completion that the committee had begun to consider the question of having a formal opening ceremony, and a supper, to which it was proposed that " two or three members of the committee of each society within easy distance should be invited, whether they were members or not."

By the middle of March the manager was in a position to state that the bakery "would be ready for business in two or three weeks' time at most." At the same time it was decided to erect a house for the manager on the property, the rent of the house to be considered later. At the same meeting the committee had a visit from Mr Keyden, writer, who stated that he had learned that the Society were desirous of raising a loan on their property, and had called to find out what the amount was and what rate of interest they were willing to pay. The secretary stated that the amount would be from £400 to £500, and the rate of interest  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum. At a later meeting the question of the opening celebrations was again considered, when, amongst other decisions arrived at, was one to the effect that two gallons of "drink," presumably whisky, should be procured for the use of those who attended. It was agreed that invitations be sent to societies who were members and to others within a convenient distance, also to the employees of the Society, past members of the committee, Mr M'Kenzie, of the P.C.M.S., Mr Marshall S.C.W.S., and such Wholesale Society directors as lived within a suitable distance for attending. The decision about the whisky evidently did not find favour with some people, for at the next meeting of the committee the matter was again under consideration, "and after mature deliberation it was then agreed to have none, as the committee had been informed that there were many objections to the same." In the beginning of May the new bakery was opened for business.

But in thus following up the negotiations about the new premises, we have been running ahead. The fourth quarterly meeting was held on 19th February 1870, when some important changes were made in the method of conducting the business. For the first year each society which was a member of the Federation had a representative on the committee, and this arrangement was continued by resolution of the quarterly meeting. The whole committee resigned in order that it might be reconstructed, and Mr Thomson was re-elected to preside over the business of the meeting. Some of the regulations drafted that afternoon are amusing. It was decided that each member of committee receive one shilling for every meeting of the committee which he attended, along with travelling

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expenses ; but it was also decided that any member of the committee who was later in arriving at a committee meeting than fifteen minutes after the time fixed for the meeting should not only forfeit his allowance for attending, but should also, unless reasonable excuse was shown, be fined sixpence for being late. What was to happen if a member did not attend at all was not stated, but no member of the committee was to be paid his allowance unless he was present at the meeting.

#### THE CHAIRMAN RETIRES.

A large number of changes were made in the personnel of the committee at this meeting. Mr Gabriel Thomson retired from the presidency, and Mr William Barclay, also of St Rollox at that time, was elected president in his stead. The other members of committee were Messrs Ferguson, Barrhead ; Gibb, Thornliebank ; John Borrowman, Anderston ; Kinniburgh, Cadder ; Mungall, Cathcart ; and Shaw, Lennoxton ; with Mr James Borrowman still secretary. At this meeting exception was taken to the propaganda activities of the committee, for a letter from Paisley Equitable Society was read to the meeting in which the Society was charged with trying to injure that society's trade with the Provident Society, and the secretary was instructed to reply denying that such had been the policy of the Society. It was also from that quarterly meeting that the proposal came that a house should be built for the manager in the new premises, in order that he might have the premises under his supervision at all times.

#### MORE CAPITAL WANTED.

As the Society, at the end of the first year, had only a paid-up capital amounting to £338, all of which was locked up in stock, fixtures, etc., it was evident that they required much more if they were to finance their larger venture. The visit of Mr Keyden has already been referred to, and ultimately a bond on the property was taken up through him, but the committee were desirous of securing capital also from the societies. These were written to by the manager, requesting them to increase the amount of loan capital they had with the Society, and by the middle of April six societies had increased their loans by an aggregate amount of £275.





M'NEIL STREET PREMISES (1897-1903).



CLYDEBANK BAKERY

The insurance on the new premises was fixed at £1,000, divided into £400 on stock, £300 on the buildings, and £300 on horses and vans. For several years the Society continued to suffer from lack of capital, however, and it was not until it had been in existence for nearly ten years that the committee ceased to be troubled with financial worries. On several occasions appeals were made to the delegates attending the quarterly meetings that they would bring under the notice of their societies the urgent need of the Baking Society for more capital, and for several years a system of receiving loans from private depositors was adopted, but this system was stopped, except in the case of employees, when the Federation began to receive enough capital from the societies to meet its needs.

#### SLOW PROGRESS.

The difficulty which arose from shortage of capital was not the only one with which the committee was faced, unfortunately. Foreman baker after foreman baker was tried, but still complaints of the poor quality of the bread continued to pour in. Added to this there were the difficulties of delivery. When the Co-operators of to-day see the vans of the U.C.B.S. arriving at the various shops with the regularity of clockwork, they may have some difficulty in realising that fifty years ago the problem of prompt delivery was a very serious one, and one which engaged the attention of management and committee almost continuously for several years. In part, this was due to the fact that the baking of bread had not been reduced in those days to a state of scientific accuracy, as it is to-day, and partly it was due to the shortcomings of the human element, which has always a tendency toward failure at the most unexpected times and often in the most unexpected ways. The craze for new bread was as great fifty years ago as it is to-day, but the difficulty of delivering it was very much greater, and it was especially great in the earlier years of the Baking Society's existence because of the fact that the majority of the societies in the outer area supplied by the Federation were but small and could give but small orders, thus increasing the cost of delivery until sometimes it transformed trade which should have been profitable into a losing business.

So much so was this the case that, in the first two or three



years, society after society, which had joined the Federation and were anxious to trade with it, had to be asked to withdraw because the cost of delivery was so great that it could only be done at a loss to the Federation. The first societies to suffer in this way were Motherwell and Dalziel. At a later date, Vale of Leven Society, which had been having their bread sent by rail, had to withdraw, and later still, Lennoxtown were asked to make arrangements for getting bread elsewhere as soon as possible, on the ground that the Baking Society was losing eleven shillings every week through delivering bread to them by van.

As time went on, too, the position was becoming more and more difficult for the manager. He does not seem to have been a strong man, or else he had grown careless. At all events, at one quarterly meeting when the criticisms of the delegates had been even more searching than usual, he left the meeting before its close, and when the committee adjourned to the committee room at the close of the meeting they found a letter from him intimating his resignation. Whether it was with the idea of getting a little of his own back, or because he thought that having engaged the employees it was his duty to dismiss them is unknown, but when he took his own departure he also dismissed the office and breadroom staffs, and there was a little difficulty for a day or two until they were brought back or others procured in their places. After discussion, the committee decided that they would not advertise for a manager, but for a confidential clerk and cashier, and Mr Robert Craig, then bookkeeper with the S.C.W.S., was the successful applicant.

The trade was increasing slowly but steadily, and during the second year averaged 90 sacks per week. Shortly after the removal to the new bakery the Society had four vans on the road, and was supplying eleven societies. In June of that year it was decided to take up thirty shares in the S.C.W.S., and pay one shilling per share, but a month later this decision was departed from in favour of one that the question of joining the Wholesale Society be left to the quarterly meeting. This decision had its origin most probably in the fact that the Society had no money to spare at the moment for investment, as at the same meeting it was decided that the manager make an effort to pay the flour merchant and take flour into stock.

At the quarterly meeting it was decided that the Society should join the S.C.W.S., and take up two shares for every society which was a member of the Federation. At the same time, the members of the committee were becoming more confident in their handling of the business, one evidence of this being the fact that they were purchasing flour in much larger quantities. The new bakery had only been in operation for six months when the trade had increased so much that the erection of other two ovens was being considered, and at the same time the reroofing of a shed for the purpose of turning it into a flour store was agreed on, and the manager was instructed to "get estimates of the cost of having the floor laid with any material that would keep out rats." It would appear, however, that the cost was more than the committee could venture to face at the moment, and it was not until the following April that the question of new ovens was again raised, when all the societies were written to on the subject and all agreed to the proposal of the committee.

Meantime the second year had ended with the position of the Society improving. The sales had amounted to over £9,000, and a dividend of sixpence had been paid each quarter. Stock and buildings were valued at £1,370, while the members held £279 in share capital and £709 in loans. The nucleus of a reserve fund had been formed, and the property of the Society had been depreciated by £150. It is interesting to note also that with the beginning of the second year the Society had begun to pay bonus on wages, a practice which has continued without intermission ever since. The beginning was humble—the amount paid in this first year was only £20, 17s.—but it marked the recognition of the principle that the worker was something more than a mere hireling; that he was a being who had something to do with the making of profits, and therefore had a right to share in them.

The committee continued unremitting in their attempts to extend the trade of the Society. Every complaint was inquired into closely, and every little while a deputation was sent to one or other of the societies with the view of inducing them to become members or to extend their trade. It is interesting to note also that the cost of flour, which had been 31/ in May 1869, had advanced to 41/ in April 1871. The first

quarter of the third year was a decidedly successful one, as it showed a surplus over cost which enabled a dividend of one shilling per pound of sales to be declared. The membership had increased to 14, and the turnover to 102 sacks per week, an increase of 11 sacks per week in one quarter. At the end of this quarter Mr Barclay retired from the presidency, after having held that position for fifteen months, and Mr Donald Cameron, Thornliebank, was elected to the chair. At the following quarterly meeting it was agreed that, in future, tickets, with a programme of business for the quarterly meeting, be sent to the societies.

Before the end of the year a building in Park Street, adjoining the Society's premises, came on the market, and was purchased by the Society for £735. At the same time the building of other two ovens was undertaken, thus bringing the capacity of the bakery up to eight ovens. The building which was purchased was in use as an engineering workshop, rented at £67, 10s. per annum, and the purchase price included an engine and boiler.

At the quarterly meeting which was held in December, the first mention was made of a subject which was to engage the attention of many quarterly meetings before being finally disposed of. This was a suggestion by Johnstone Society that the Baking Society should consider seriously the possibility of opening branch bakeries as their business extended. Meantime, Vale of Leven Society had approached the Baking Society with the view of having bread delivered to them by rail, and a van had been fitted up for this purpose, so the Board came to the decision to hold over the consideration of branch bakeries until they saw what the results of conveyance by rail were going to be. The delivery difficulty was getting more acute every week at this time, and it was found that two societies which had ceased to take their bread from the Society, and whose action had been described by the committee as "utterly subversive of true Co-operation and detrimental to the interests of the Baking Society," had done so because of the irregularity of delivery, and declared themselves "willing to begin again as soon as they could see an assurance of a regular and steady supply."

In order to suit the convenience of Glasgow societies an



arrangement came into force in the beginning of 1872 whereby the Baking Society undertook to deliver bread at the houses of the members of these societies for an additional charge of 9d. per hour for the time spent in this work. About the same time the question of baking biscuits on days when the general work was easy was considered, and this new branch of business was finally entered on. The turnover for the third year was larger than that of the first two combined, being 6,341 sacks; an average of 122 per week. Owing to the rise in the price of flour, however, and in some degree also to the heavy costs of delivery, the surpluses on the year's trading showed considerable fluctuations; for while the dividend earned during the first quarter was one shilling, those for the succeeding quarters were fivepence, sixpence, and threepence respectively. The Society was now quite a large property owner, the value of the buildings as shown in the balance-sheet being £2,421, while the value of live and other stock was £870. Several new vans of a four-wheeled design had been built during the year in order to facilitate delivery, and several new horses had also been purchased. The cash value of the sales for the year was over £16,000, and the combined share and loan capital was £1,411. Reserves had been increased to £54, and buildings and stocks written down by £368 during the year.

In March 1872 Mr Cameron resigned from the presidency of the Society as he had become an employee, and Mr Andrew Brown (Paisley Provident) was elected president until the quarterly meeting, when his appointment was confirmed. Meantime the Society was having some trouble with the last pair of ovens erected. The gentleman appointed as inspector reported that they were not according to specification, and were of less value than had been contracted for. At the same time he suggested that an endeavour should be made to settle the matter amicably, "as a lawsuit would result in a loss to both parties"; which sensible advice was taken by the committee, who, however, decided "to retain the money lying in their hands until satisfied with the finish and durability of the work." They also decided to deduct £10 from the estimate price for departure from the terms of specification. At a later meeting, however, it was decided to meet the oven-builder half way and be content with a deduction of £5.

For some time negotiations had been going on between the Society's tenant of the engineering shop and the committee on the question of whether the boiler in that shop, which was the property of the Society, should be kept in repair by the tenant or by the owners. The committee contended that, according to the terms of the lease, the duty of keeping the boiler and other machinery in repair devolved on the tenant, but as a way out of the difficulty offered to sell the boiler and engine to him. The matter was finally adjusted by the tenant taking over the engine and boiler, and paying for them by an increase in rent amounting to £5 per annum. At the quarterly meeting which was held on 2nd June 1872 the balance-sheet was submitted to severe criticism, the ground of complaint being the smallness of the profit shown in view of the increasing sales of the Society. For the first time in the history of the Society the turnover had exceeded £2,000 for the quarter, but the surplus was only £119, and the dividend sixpence, while nothing was added to the reserve fund. The delegates to the quarterly meeting also combined to express considerable dissatisfaction with the quality, shape, and general appearance of the bread, and the committee were urged to take energetic measures to place the Society in a better position in this respect as well as in that of profit. At almost every meeting of the committee complaints were being made about the quality of the bread and lateness of delivery, and they were at their wits end to find a remedy. Discussions took place meeting after meeting about difficulties of delivery, varied every now and again by a discussion on the subject of the high rate of expense. Investigations into the cost of baking were set on foot, but with no results. A suggestion was made by Paisley Provident Society that the discount allowed to the societies be reduced from 10 per cent. to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in order to cover losses in working, but no action seems to have been taken in this direction at the moment. In order to find remedies for the continuous complaints about the quality of the bread and its delivery, a rearrangement of duties took place; the stable foreman being made responsible for the delivery, and the foreman baker for the quality of the bread, while the manager continued to act as cashier and bookkeeper. These alterations did not seem to make much difference, however, as complaints continued to come in with as great frequency as before.

The arrangement which had been made to supply Vale of Leven Society with bread had evidently not been working satisfactorily, for that society intimated its intention of withdrawing from the Federation. The adjustment of the terms of this withdrawal took many months of negotiation. It was on 4th May 1872 that the committee received the intimation that the society intended to withdraw from the Federation, but it was not until 19th April 1873 that the final adjustments were made and the matter settled. In this case there was dispute as to the amount which the withdrawing society should pay for the delivery of their bread by rail, this being finally adjusted by computing the cost of delivery per 100 dozens to Barrhead and to Vale of Leven, and charging the latter society with the difference. Another peculiar practice of the Federation at this time was that of retaining for the reserve and depreciation funds a proportion of the capital of retiring societies. This was done even when the societies withdrew at the request of the committee and against their own wishes, although in the three or four cases where this occurred the percentage deducted was less than that usually retained. In the case of Vale of Leven Society  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. was charged, while Dalziel and Motherwell societies were only charged 5 per cent.

By the end of the third quarter in 1872 a further extension had become necessary in order that more storage room might be had, and it was decided that the only way to get the necessary space was to build another storey to the present flour store. The great difficulty was lack of the necessary money, but it was thought that if the extension became imperative a bond might be obtained to cover the cost. A short time later a letter was received from the Anderston Society, in which a protest was entered against any further extensions being made in the bakery meantime. At this time the Society was in somewhat grave difficulties for want of money, as, in addition to other debts which were owing, their account with the Wholesale Society amounted to £4,000, equivalent to nine weeks turnover. Inside the next fortnight, however, the manager was able to report that he had paid £1,000 to the Wholesale Society.

At this time the committee had under discussion the method of supplying flour to the Society. It was alleged by some members of the committee that the manager had not a free



hand in ordering flour, as "another party" had taken it upon himself to send in flour without the knowledge of the manager. Mr Sturrock stated that he was aware of all contracts entered into, but that on a recent occasion he had to cancel an order because he found after his order had been given that flour was being sent to the bakery without his knowledge. At the following meeting this question was again taken up, and it appears from what transpired at that meeting that Mr Borrowman was the "other party" referred to above. That gentleman explained that the contracts were made through the Wholesale Society, and no irregularity could occur if the manager sent his orders to the Wholesale Society instead of sending them to the millers, as he had been in the habit of doing. In the course of the conversation the chairman pointed out that although, because of the fluctuations in the price of flour which were taking place, they had for some time delegated their power to make contracts to the manager and Mr Borrowman jointly—not separately as some people had supposed—they still retained in their own hands such powers, to be used as soon as they might think it right so to do.

Early in the third quarter of this year Mr Smith (St Rollox) was appointed assistant secretary, as Mr Borrowman was sometimes unable to attend. At the quarterly meeting, which was held on 1st March 1873, Mr Smith was appointed secretary, and Mr Borrowman retired from the committee, after having taken a large share in the conduct of its affairs from the inception of the Society. At the December quarterly meeting the manager resigned, as already stated in the beginning of this chapter, and Mr Robert Craig was appointed. The fourth year was not to end without more trouble however. A special meeting was called on 28th December 1872, at the request of Barrhead and Thornliebank societies, and Mr Ferguson (Barrhead), who had been one of the first directors of the Federation, placed his society's case before the meeting. He stated that his society was of opinion that the Baking Society was in an unsatisfactory state, and on behalf of Barrhead and Thornliebank societies placed eight propositions before the meeting with the object of putting the Federation on a more stable basis.

## PROPOSALS FOR BETTER WORKING.

The first proposition was that a manager be employed ; but this was defeated by an amendment that the management be left in the hands of the committee. The second proposal was that the foreman baker should be the party who should judge the quality of the flour before purchasing, the quantity to be decided by the committee, and it was accepted, as was the third—that no person be a member of committee who has anything to do with the making or selling of flour to the bakery (but not to the exclusion of operatives) so that the committee be left perfectly untrammelled in their actions.

Another proposition was to the effect that the members of the Baking Society's committee should be elected for that committee only, and not be simply delegates from the committee of their society ; but as this affected one of the rules of the Society it was not discussed. It was also proposed that the committee should watch the purchases of societies with a view to dealing with those who were not purchasing enough to earn their fair share of profit, and considering whether they should be allowed to continue as members of the Society. The committee pointed out that they were already doing this, and the meeting agreed to the proposal. Another proposal was to the effect that when the additional shares had been called up the committee should purchase flour where it could be had best. This proposal sounds as if there was some suspicion in the minds of the proposers that the Society was being hampered in obtaining the best flour for its purpose by lack of money, and as the delegates gave a general acquiescence to the proposal it would seem that the suspicion was fairly general. It certainly could be said for the proposal that it gave the committee full power to do the best they could for their Society.

Just before the end of the fourth year Motherwell and Dalziel societies dropped out of the Federation at the request of the committee, as although both societies were loyal purchasers, the cost of delivery was so great that the Society was losing money on their trade. The Federation still consisted of fifteen societies, however—viz., Anderston, Barrhead, Busby, Cathcart, Johnstone, Lennoxton, Cadder, Parkhead, Elderslie, Howwood, Eastern, Paisley Provident, Thornliebank, St Rollox,

and Avonbank—and other societies were being supplied with bread. About this time, also, a new departure was made. The committee had found that their biscuit trade was not a profitable one, and the cashier was instructed to make inquiries as to the terms on which some of the Glasgow biscuit manufacturing firms would supply them with biscuits. It was finally arranged that Gray, Dunn & Co. supply them with biscuits through the Wholesale Society, and this arrangement continued for some time until a fire at the biscuit factory put an end to the connection, when the trade went to Herberts Ltd.

During the fourth year the Society had made considerable progress, and the trade for the year showed a substantial increase, but it had not been very profitable. Indeed in the fourth quarter, after provision had been made for interest and depreciation, there was nothing left to divide, while nothing had been added to the reserve fund during the year. The aggregate output for the year was 7,955 sacks, equal to an average of 153 sacks a week, which was an average increase of 31 sacks per week over the turnover of the previous year. The Society was still much hampered in its operations from lack of capital; the total share and loan capital being only £1,618. During the latter half of the year the price of flour had been very high, reaching in the later months of the year 45/6 per sack for the average quality used.

Yet, although there were still many anxious days ahead for the committee and not a few lean years, with the close of the fourth year the Society had been established on a firm foundation. Henceforth there were not the same defects of management to contend with, and what difficulties did arise were due to weakness in the societies which were customers of the Bakery rather than to causes operating within the Federation itself. In a later chapter mention will be made of some of the difficulties which arose owing to the weakness of some of the societies which were members of the Federation.



## CHAPTER V.

### THE BRANCH CONTROVERSY.

A LENGTHY CONTROVERSY—TO BRANCH OR NOT TO BRANCH?—AN OPTIMISTIC REPORT—LACK OF CAPITAL—STRONG OPPOSITION—BARRHEAD THREATENS WITHDRAWAL—THE QUESTION REOPENED—BARRHEAD DECIDES TO WITHDRAW—SHELVED AGAIN—DISSATISFACTION IN PAISLEY AND JOHNSTONE—BRANCH OPENED IN GLASGOW—THE FINAL DECISION—BARRHEAD, PAISLEY PROVIDENT, AND JOHNSTONE WITHDRAW.

IN the preceding chapter we noted that a proposal was made at one of the general meetings of the Society that branch bakeries should be established. It was a proposal which occasioned a great deal of discussion and was the cause of several heated debates during the next few years, and it is therefore important enough to merit a chapter to itself. The idea was first mooted at the quarterly meeting held in December 1871, when Johnstone Society delegates in the course of a general discussion brought forward the suggestion "that the Baking Society should think of the possibility of opening branch establishments as their business extends." The idea was favourably entertained then; but it was obviously impossible to do anything at the time, and it was not until the quarterly meeting which was held on 30th November 1872, exactly a year later, that anything further was heard of the subject.

At that meeting a general discussion took place "as to the desirability of opening a branch bakery in Paisley or Johnstone." The matter ultimately dropped for the time being, but it was left with the committees of Johnstone, Paisley Provident, and Paisley Equitable societies "to make inquiries in their respective localities as to a suitable place for the business, which could be rented, leased, or bought, the probable cost, and all other information that may be necessary, and forward the information obtained at as early a date as possible to the committee." The

Johnstone committee were especially enthusiastic about the proposal, and before next quarterly meeting a report was in the hands of the committee. This report was read to the delegates at the next general meeting of the Society, and a general conversation took place in the course of which the opinion was expressed that however desirable it might be that the Society should branch out in the manner indicated, it was inexpedient that it should be done then in view of the state of the Society's affairs. The committee of Johnstone Society were, therefore, thanked for the trouble they had taken over the business and for the report which they had prepared. It was also agreed that this report be printed and circulated amongst the members of the Federation, and that the subject be brought up at next quarterly meeting.

#### JOHNSTONE SOCIETY'S REPORT.

The report of the Johnstone Society is so interesting and throws so much light on the affairs of the Federation that it is worthy of being printed in full, as issued in circular form by the Bakery committee.

*To the Committee of Management and Delegates representing the United Co-operative Baking Society Limited, Glasgow.*

GENTLEMEN,—Having been appointed at your quarterly meeting, held 30th November 1872, to report on the results which would be likely to flow from your Society having a branch bakery in Johnstone, we respectfully beg to offer the following for your consideration.

The advantages which the promoters of your Society saw in having a "united management, a concentration of labour, and a combined purchasing power," is nearly, if not altogether, neutralised by the high cost of your productive and distributive departments; ten shillings a sack is, we believe, something unknown in Scotland as the cost of baking and distributing common loaf bread, and in your establishment it cannot be set down even at this high rate, as your auditors at last quarterly meeting warned us that the depreciation of your fixed stock was not commensurate to its "tear and wear," and we believe investigation during the quarter now ended has brought out that your liabilities in direct debts were greater than was accounted for in your balance of October last.

This being the case, it is a duty incumbent on all to examine into and see if anything can be done to remove the obstruction to progress and place the Federation on a sound and stable basis, beneficial alike to individual and to the union of societies.

To do this reforms of more or less consequence may require to be introduced, but the *one* on which we are commissioned to report, and which appears to us as the most urgent, and *the most likely in being*

*effectual* in removing the evils complained of, is the setting down of a branch in Johnstone, or some other place, where a great amount of distributive expense could be saved at a small outlay.

The cheapness of carriage of flour in the bulk and its dearness when manufactured into bread, which is at once bulky, fragile, and heavy, suggests readily the idea that it would be well to have branches set down in localities where there is a consumpt of bread large enough to work them successfully ; we consider Johnstone a place of this class, and desire to lay before you, in detail, some of the reasons why we think so.

In making Johnstone a district with a branch bakery we would class the following societies together, viz. :—Paisley Provident, Paisley Equitable, Howwood, Elderslie, Kilbarchan, Linwood, and Johnstone. Taking October balance as an average of the bread taken by these different societies, we find in the aggregate that the six societies first named took bread to the value of £892, 10s. 6d., and that Johnstone Society took bread to the amount of £884, 12s. 9d., a total of £1,777, 3s. 3d., or within £100 of being a third of all the purchases made at the Bakery during the quarter. The Johnstone Society's quantity, £884 a quarter, averages something like sixty-four dozen loaves daily, the outcome of four sacks of flour ; say, then, with the other societies named, eight sacks of daily consumpt. The weight of this number of sacks, in the bulk, is one ton (twenty cwt.), and the price of carriage and delivery in Johnstone, from Glasgow, is four shillings. These eight sacks, made into bread in Glasgow, gives a weight, including boards, of over thirty-four cwt. ; this is exclusive of vans, which, we believe, are about half as much more, or seventeen cwt. each. In this condition, then, of baked bread it costs your Society thirty shillings or over daily to deliver to the various societies of the named district. Supposing, then, that you had a branch in Johnstone and a more restricted delivery system adopted, we entertain no doubt but one horse and van could overtake the whole *three mile radius*, give and deliver the required bread to the different societies. The cost of this would be about twelve shillings a day, which would leave a clear profit to the Society of fourteen shillings a day, or £54, 12s. a quarter, nearly £220 a year.

#### *Another View of the Case.*

We have had an interview with a practical managing baker, and his estimate of the cost of production is much below your present expense ; he considers that the quantity required (eight or nine sacks a day) could be baked into loaves at a cost of three shillings per sack (he laid stress on the fact that the job was *loaf baking alone*, and said that men *were able* and really *did do* more of this kind of work). Buying the flour at the then price of fifty shillings per sack, and adding three shillings for baking, rent, etc., we have a gross cost of fifty-three shillings per sack. The outcome from this quantity of flour should be sixteen dozen small loaves ; retailing them at the then price of 4½d. each, you have the sum of sixty-eight shillings ; 10 per cent. less would be sixty-one shillings and twopence, or a profit of eight shillings and twopence on each sack baked and sold ; this eight



times (a daily output) would give sixty-five shillings and fourpence per day, or £19, 12s. a week, £254, 16s. a quarter. But allowing half this quantity has to be delivered to societies, and say this will cost three shillings per sack, which would give a total cost of about £48, 16s., which sum deducted from the £254, 16s. would still leave the sum of £206 a quarter of a clear profit realised from the business done by the seven societies comprising the proposed district.

Regarding the practical part of the scheme we have nothing to offer in way of a ready-made bakehouse or other suitable premises, and we are afraid that should the business be gone into, as proposed, new premises would require to be got; on this, however, we ask your consideration to the fact that your present premises have not the necessary storage for flour which your large turnover requires. This is attested by the proposal which was made six months ago for alterations, and if it is true, as we believe it is, that properly stored flour is from one to two shillings a bag better in outcome than when used as has hitherto been done at the Bakery, one shilling on each sack baked for a quarter, say 1,800 sacks, and you have a sum of £90.

The alterations which were proposed and were estimated to cost about £200 have never been carried into effect, consequently the Bakery labours under the disadvantage of want of storage at a loss equal to something like £90 a quarter.

We know full well the high cost of distribution, and some are sanguine the productive cost could also be lessened; could not this sum, then, of £200, or say £300, required for storage purposes be laid out on a branch bakery in the Johnstone district, and take away a third of the trade from the centre; you would then have storage to suit your requirements for some time to come, very probably you would be less for productive expenses, and most certainly your cost of distribution would be so much curtailed as to release the Federation from the incubus which at present keeps her down.

Gentlemen, our aim and earnest desire is the prosperity of the Federation and its component parts; we lay these considerations before you and leave the matter in your hands, being confident your united wisdom will be well able to direct the path which will earliest and best lead to better and happier times for the United Co-operative Baking Society.

THE JOHNSTONE SOCIETY'S COMMITTEE.

Johnstone, 21st February 1873.

At that time it would seem that the representatives of all the societies were enamoured with the idea of branching out, especially in view of the very rosy picture which had been presented in the Johnstone Society's report, but they realised that at the moment branching out was impossible. The Federation's commitments in capital expenditure were already as much as could be borne; the cost of building a new bakery would add considerably to the burden, and neither delegates

nor directors could see how it could be carried ; so, when the subject was brought up again at the June quarterly meeting, it was left in the hands of the committee, with the proviso that no extension take place until a general meeting of the members had been called.

The proposal, however, had never been one which was pleasing to Barrhead Society. Immediately after the remit to Johnstone Society and the Paisley societies to collect information, a deputation from Barrhead had waited on the Bakery committee, and, after pointing out that the capital of the Society was far from being what it ought to be, they said they had been instructed by their committee to state that they considered it inexpedient in the meantime to proceed with the proposed branch at either Paisley or Johnstone because of the plant and other necessities which would be required and which the funds of the Federation were not in a position to meet. It was owing to the determined opposition of the Barrhead and Thornliebank delegates and the strength of their argument that the capital of the Society was insufficient for the enterprise, that the Johnstone scheme was held over.

Nothing further was heard of the proposal until the beginning of 1876. By that time the trade of the Federation was taxing the productive capacity of the bakery to its utmost limits, and on the 29th of April a special meeting of delegates was convened for the purpose of considering the situation, and especially a recommendation by the committee that a small bakery which was to let in Paisley Road should be taken for a period of three years. A lengthy discussion took place. Mr Inglis, Paisley Provident Society, moved "that the committee be empowered to open a branch bakery, either in Paisley or Johnstone, and to lease temporary premises in the locality chosen until the new bakery was ready." At once Mr Tolmie, of Avonbank, brought forward an amendment "that the committee be empowered to take such action at once as will appear to them to be for the best interests of the Federation." Mr Paton, Paisley Provident Society, seconded Mr Inglis's motion, and Mr Johnstone, Barrhead, the amendment of Mr Tolmie ; but the motion that a branch be opened in the West was carried by 42 votes to 39 for the amendment. While the amendment did not prohibit in so many words the suggestion

contained in the motion, it was believed that it would have that effect, because, although on this question of branching out the committee as a body had always held a neutral position, it was believed that they were not very favourable to the proposal of the Paisley and Johnstone societies.

#### BARRHEAD OPPOSITION.

It might appear that the question was now settled finally, but that was far from being the case. The Barrhead Society had always been opposed to the suggestion that a branch should be established at either Paisley or Johnstone, and it was suspected that the adoption of this proposal would lead to their withdrawal from the Federation. Whatever influence the decision may have had on the final step taken by Barrhead Society, however, other influences were at work there in favour of the society commencing to bake bread for themselves. At a meeting of the committee of that society, held on 6th March 1876, the propriety of the society erecting a bakery of their own was discussed on the motion of a Mr M'Quarrie. The committee were not favourable to the idea, but at the monthly meeting, which was held four days later, a more extended discussion took place, and, although no formal motion was made at the time, the minutes of the society record that "the members seemed to be rather in favour of starting a bakery." At the next monthly meeting, also, held in the beginning of April, the quality of the bread which they were receiving from the Federation was discussed, and a suggestion was made that the society intimate to the Baking Society that it was their intention to erect a bakery of their own. It is apparent, therefore, that the idea of entering into the baking industry for themselves was being considered by the Barrhead people before any definite decision had been come to by the U.C.B.S. on the question of placing a branch in the West. That decision brought the question to a crisis in Barrhead, however, and at the quarterly meeting of the society, which was held on 9th May 1876, the following motion was adopted by the meeting :—

"With a view to mend past and present complaints of the bread received from the wholesale bakery, and of preventing the committee from carrying out the motion passed by the delegates at their last general meeting to plant a branch bakery in Paisley, involving us in more debt, resolved that it is the opinion of this meeting that



we withdraw from the Bakery and start a bakery on our own account."

On 22nd May a committee was appointed by the committee of Barrhead Society to look out for premises which would be suitable for a bakery. This did not settle the question even yet, however. At the meeting of the Baking Society committee, which took place on 17th June, a deputation from Barrhead came to make suggestions, particularly about the delivery of bread in the latter part of the week. From the U.C.B.S. minute we can gather, reading between the lines, that the discussion had been warm. The committee's account of what took place states that they had "no difficulty in overtaking orders in the beginning of the week, but it was somewhat difficult to overtake them at the latter end; but the committee refused to say that they could not supply the full complement to Barrhead on the Saturday; and that Barrhead be left to conduct their business as they thought best." It would appear, from what is known of what was taking place in Barrhead, that the deputation had mentioned the likelihood of that society withdrawing from the Federation, and the last clause was the committee's answer to what they may have interpreted as a threat. One good result of the meeting of representatives of the two boards was that the Barrhead people were induced to reconsider their position, for a special meeting of the members was held on 30th June at which the following resolution was adopted:—

"That the question of withdrawal from the U.C.B.S. and of baking for ourselves be adjourned *sine die*, and that this meeting declares itself of opinion that the bread supplied, while it is pure and wholesome, has not been up to the standard of quality and appearance required by our members; and that we are unanimously opposed to any extension of the United Bakery beyond the premises that it at present occupies; and that a deputation be appointed from this meeting to place these matters before its committee of management, and to urge upon them the adoption of means to improve the quality of the bread, and the necessity of reconsidering the recent resolution to plant a branch bakery in Paisley or Johnstone, in order to preserve the integrity and harmony of the Federation."

The result of this deputation's visit was that a special meeting of the U.C.B.S. committee was held on 29th July, when the committee decided "that we, as a committee, take no action towards the increasing of the productive power of the bakery

until such time as we hear the opinion of the forthcoming quarterly meeting on the matter."

Everything seemed to be going smoothly now, but it was only surface tranquillity, for at the same meeting where the Barrhead Society passed the resolution quoted above they also unanimously adopted another "to grant powers to the acting committee of this society (the committee which had been appointed to look out for premises suitable for a bakery) to rent, lease, purchase, or erect premises suitable for carrying on its own trade." At the September meeting of the Baking Society, Mr Stark, Barrhead, moved "that in order to preserve the integrity and harmony of the Federation we consider it necessary that the resolution passed at special meeting of the Federation, held on 29th April, 'to plant a branch bakery at Paisley or Johnstone,' be rescinded by this meeting, and that no permanent extension of the bakery take place beyond the present premises." Mr Hall, Thornliebank, seconded.

At once Paisley Provident delegates were on the alert, and Messrs Lauchland and Cumming of that society moved as an amendment: "That this meeting adheres to the resolution agreed to at special meeting on 29th April, in reference to the planting of a branch in Paisley or Johnstone." The discussion was long and animated, but again the glamour of a branch was on the delegates, and the Paisley amendment was agreed to by 41 votes to 30 for Barrhead motion.

#### BARRHEAD DECIDES TO WITHDRAW.

This decision at once made its influence felt in Barrhead, and at the monthly meeting of that society which took place on 12th September notice was given of a resolution to the effect that "This Society hold a special meeting on 8th November to consider a motion 'that this Society withdraw and cease to be a member of the U.C.B.S.' " At this special meeting the resolution to withdraw was agreed to by a very large majority, and on 4th December it was agreed that the Bakery committee be informed officially of the decision to withdraw, and that the letter state that the society would continue to purchase bread until their own bakery was ready. It is probable that this letter was a result of what had taken place at the Bakery quarterly meeting on the preceding Saturday, when the

chairman had been questioned about the withdrawal of the society, and had stated that nothing official had yet been received from Barrhead Society with reference to their withdrawal. He was also questioned as to whether any steps had been taken with regard to establishing a branch bakery, and stated that no action had been taken regarding the branch. The subject then dropped.

#### DISSATISFACTION IN PAISLEY AND JOHNSTONE.

It is easy to understand that the Paisley and Johnstone societies were not satisfied with the delays which were taking place in placing a branch somewhere in their neighbourhood. They had succeeded in carrying their point in 1873, but the financial position of the Federation had prevented anything from being done. Then in April of 1876 they had secured a majority of votes—true, it was only a majority of three—in favour of their proposals, and in September this decision had been confirmed by a much larger majority. Yet, in view of the strenuous opposition of Barrhead Society and the repeated threats of withdrawal made by that society, they must have recognised that it would not do to hurry matters, for with almost 600 dozen loaves taken away from the weekly output of the Federation, the premises would be ample; and, in view of that contingency, the committee of the Bakery were justified in pursuing a cautious policy. Notwithstanding the chairman's disclaimer of any "official" knowledge of Barrhead Society's intentions, it was generally known throughout the Federation that they had decided to start baking for themselves, and it was doubtless this knowledge which was responsible for the statement by the chairman that "no action had been taken" to establish a branch being allowed to pass as quietly as it did.

#### A BRANCH IN GLASGOW.

Whatever might be the result of the withdrawal of Barrhead Society, however, if and when it did take place, there was no doubt but that the capacity of the bakery premises were overtaxed at the moment. The committee had been compelled to refuse offers of trade because of inability to supply the societies, and on discovering that a small bakery, situated in Paisley Road adjacent to their central premises, was to let, they



came to the decision to appeal to the members for power to rent it for a year while awaiting developments. A circular was drafted and sent out to the societies, in which were explained the committee's reasons for not proceeding with the branch bakery, and also the reasons why they considered it advisable that the small bakery in Paisley Road should be rented. The contents of this circular fanned the ire of the Paisley and Johnstone societies, whose delegates turned out in great force to the quarterly meeting, held on 3rd March 1877.

The circular was submitted by Mr Slater, secretary of the Federation, and gave rise to a lengthy discussion. It does not seem to have occurred to anyone that the Paisley and Johnstone societies might follow the example of Barrhead and withdraw, and the idea was largely entertained by the delegates that if a branch was established in that locality, it would relieve the congestion in the Central Bakery for a long time to come. Finally, after a very long discussion, Mr Inglis, Paisley Provident, moved "That the circular lie on the table, and that the committee take their instructions as to how they should meet the extra demand from the resolutions agreed to on the matter at previous meetings." Mr Paton, Paisley Provident, seconded. Mr Steel, Avonbank, moved, and Mr Stark, Barrhead, seconded, "That the committee be empowered to rent premises temporarily in the vicinity of the present bakehouse." The vote resulted in the amendment of Mr Steel being carried by 39 votes to 34 for the motion of Mr Inglis. The question was not yet settled, however. Immediately the result of the vote was declared, Mr O'May, Paisley Provident, rose and moved: "That this question be again brought up at the quarterly general meeting six months hence." It should have been apparent to the delegates that this was a blocking motion and might prevent the committee from doing anything, but it was evidently not so regarded, or else the delegates could not make up their minds on the subject, for it was agreed to without comment. The committee did not allow the motion for reopening the question in six months to hinder them from going on with the new branch, for immediately the meeting was over they gave instructions to the sub-committee to secure temporary premises in the vicinity.

## THE END OF THE PROPOSAL.

The subject again arose at the 34th quarterly meeting, held on 1st September, when Paisley Provident was again forward with a motion: "That if a branch be required after Barrhead had left the Federation, it be established at Paisley or Johnstone, and that the present branch in Glasgow be not retaken." To this it was moved by Mr Gardiner, Cathcart, and seconded by Mr M'Murran, Glasgow Eastern, as an amendment, "That this question lie over for six months." After a long discussion the Paisley motion was withdrawn, on condition that the amendment limit the period of lying over to three months, and that, meantime, a special committee, constituted from the delegates present and from the committee, be appointed to investigate the matter and report to the next quarterly meeting. This was agreed to, and Messrs M'Murran, O'May, Aitchison, Brown, and Slater were appointed the special committee. In less than three months' time the committee sent out their report to the societies. The report contained details of three plans which the sub-committee had considered. The first of these, that of a branch bakery in Paisley, they considered could not be worked except at a slight loss. With regard to the second one, that of a branch at Johnstone, they considered that the loss would be slightly greater; while, with the branch at Johnstone, the trade would be more difficult to work. The third proposal which had been considered was that of increasing the number of ovens in the present premises, and in the report they stated they were not prepared to recommend any one of the schemes in the meantime, but recommended, instead, that the branch in Paisley Road be taken for another year. The reason they gave for this recommendation was that they considered that an inquiry should be made into the advisability of introducing machinery into the bakehouse, as the whole of their premises would be vacant in eighteen months and could be utilised; if the result of the inquiry was satisfactory, steps should then be taken to have it introduced. This report was accepted by the delegates at the quarterly meeting, and so a subject which had been a fruitful source of controversy at the general meetings of the Federation for nearly two years disappeared. It was again raised at a

quarterly meeting some years later, when the question of removing altogether from St James Street was being discussed, but was summarily disposed of by the delegates.

BARRHEAD, JOHNSTONE, AND PAISLEY PROVIDENT  
WITHDRAW.

Meantime the Barrhead bakery was ready for work and baking was commenced in the last week of the year, but the society, although it had withdrawn a large proportion of the loan capital invested with the Baking Society in order to pay for the erection of its own bakery, retained membership of the Federation until requested by the committee to withdraw as the interest on the share capital was an unnecessary burden on the Federation's funds. The society was allowed to withdraw without any of its capital being retained, being the first of the withdrawing societies to which this privilege was extended. In 1894, after fancy biscuit baking had been firmly established by the Baking Society, Barrhead Society rejoined again, taking up 1,500 shares.

Another withdrawal which occurred in a comparatively short time, and which was doubtless influenced to some extent by the refusal to establish a branch in the West, was that of Johnstone Society. At a meeting of the committee which took place on 15th February 1879, the minutes record a conversation which took place regarding a decision of that society, come to the previous evening, to start baking for themselves. The effect of the information that they were likely to lose Johnstone Society's custom so soon after having lost that of Barrhead had a damping effect on the spirits of the committee, and it was decided that in the meantime the erection of the new ovens which they had proposed to build be not proceeded with. With the withdrawal of Paisley Provident Society at the end of 1880, consequent on having a bakery of their own ready for occupation, the controversy with respect to the branch, and also its effects on the welfare of the Federation, may be said to have ended.

The Federation had lost three of its best customers, but it had succeeded in keeping its business centralised. It must always remain a matter of argument whether it would have been better to branch out at an earlier date and do for the societies in Renfrewshire that which in later years it has done for



Clydebank and the North of Ireland. The question of branches is still one on which there is considerable controversy, and, at any rate, it is certain that the committee, and latterly the delegates, played for safety, and chose to conserve the strength of the Federation at a time when all its strength was needed rather than weaken it by widening the scope of the society's energies. The majority of the committee, it is quite evident, were opposed to branching out, for had this not been so, they would have gone ahead when two general meetings of the Society gave them the mandate.

It is difficult to see that any great harm was done by the course which was adopted. The growth of the three societies has been so great that each of them is large enough to maintain a bakery of its own, and although the Federation had one or two temporary setbacks, none of them was serious enough to affect its stability or its efficiency. It is possible, therefore, to argue that either decision would have had equally good results. There we may leave what was undoubtedly a stirring controversy while it lasted, the importance of which at the time forms sufficient justification for the space which has been devoted to it.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ST JAMES STREET: DEVELOPMENTS.

IMPROVED MANAGEMENT—PRIVATE LOANS—IRREGULARITY OF ORDERS AND OTHER DIFFICULTIES—A NEW FOREMAN BAKER—SHORT WEIGHT IN FLOUR—DELIVERY DIFFICULTIES CONTINUE—UNINFORMED CRITICISM—AN ECHO OF THE IRONWORKS FAILURE—NEW MEMBERS—AMENDING THE RULES—EXTENSIONS—MANAGER RESIGNS: SECRETARY APPOINTED—OAKMILL SOCIETY—APPEAL FOR FUNDS—TRADE AND FINANCIAL POSITION IMPROVING—ANDERSTON SOCIETY'S FAILURE—GOOD NEWS—MACHINERY INSTALLED—BECOMING RICH—TEN YEARS' WORK.

IN tracing the development of the agitation for and against the establishment of a branch bakery we have been running ahead of the calendar. A new cashier, who was virtually manager of the business, had been appointed in the last days of 1872, and during the next two and a half years he carried on the business with as much success as the conditions under which he was compelled to work permitted. In these two and a half years he inaugurated a system of private loans to the Federation for the purpose of increasing the working capital of the Society; the smallness of the capital having been until then the greatest difficulty under which the Federation laboured; and so successful was this venture that by April 1875 the Society was in a position to deposit £500 on loan with the S.C.W.S., while six months earlier he was in a position to recommend to the committee that the acceptance of private loans except from those who had already deposits with the Society, and from the employees, be discontinued; a recommendation which was put in force by the committee a month later.

In other ways, too, Mr Craig brought prosperity to the Federation. He found it in a position of peril. For a long time after his appointment he found himself in the position, meeting after meeting, of having to present to the committee accounts which had been incurred by his predecessor without

being able to check them in any way. One of these, presented in 1874, had been incurred from 1870 to 1872, and the explanation offered by the contractor was that he thought the U.C.B.S. and the S.C.W.S. were all the same, and had kept the invoice back until the building was finished. Mr Craig was given the job of arranging on the best terms possible. For several years the difficulty already alluded to, that societies did not pay their accounts promptly, continued. This was particularly the case with two of the societies which were in very low water about this time, one of them eventually succumbing. There was also continuous difficulty about the maintenance of sales. Sometimes a society would take bread for a number of weeks or months, and then cease all at once without any reason being given. At other times there would be a series of complaints about the quality of the bread and the reluctance of members to purchase, and investigation showed that these complaints emanated from the shopman and had very little foundation in fact. In some cases the shopman was the society, the committee seeming to exercise little or no supervision; while in other cases there was, of course, genuine cause for complaint owing to bad or irregular deliveries or to barm going wrong with the baker. Such causes were not sufficient to account for the constant stream of complaints which were launched at the heads of the committee, however, and doubtless close investigation would have shown that many of them had their origin in a desire on the part of salesmen to do business with firms which made it worth their while. With the appointment of Mr Lang as foreman baker there was certainly a decrease in the number of complaints, and the sales improved.

A discussion which took place at a committee meeting in June 1873 showed that there was not only a dispute with Barrhead Society, a deputation having been sent to that society's meeting and been refused admission to the meeting, but also that the Baking Society's committee had not yet been placed on a satisfactory basis. The chairman stated at the committee meeting that his committee had only heard of the Barrhead meeting casually, and expressed the opinion that it was the duty of the member of the board from Barrhead Society to have informed the Bakery board of the fact that it was being held. On the other hand the Barrhead delegate said that he had



forgotten all about it, and that in any case he had no authority from Barrhead committee to say anything on the matter. It would appear that a long discussion took place on the subject, and especially on the position of members of the Baking Society's committee in relation to the work of that society, the opinion being freely expressed that to members of the board of the Baking Society the affairs of the Baking Society should be the first consideration. The subject was ultimately dropped, on the understanding that it was the duty of any member of the Baking Society's committee to inform that board forthwith of anything which affected the interests of the Society.

About this time, also, some trouble was being experienced with one of the millers who were supplying them with flour. Several sacks of flour had been weighed by the manager, and each had been found to be short in weight to the extent of several pounds. The result was that the committee determined to purchase a "beam and scales" in order that the flour might be weighed as it came into the bakery, and meantime it was decided that at present no more flour be purchased from the defaulting miller. At the same time a claim was made against him for short weight. About this time, also, some difficulty arose with respect to the delivery of bread to Lennoxtown Society. For some time the committee had been of the opinion that they were losing money by delivering bread to this society, and several suggestions had been made as to the most economical means of delivery. No one of these seemed to find favour with the Lennoxtown people, however, and that committee ultimately decided to ask the Bakery board to supply them with bread by means of the van as usual, and, if necessary, to retain the dividend. The Bakery committee, however, after considering the matter, came to the conclusion that, apart from the principle, this method would not pay them, and decided to make no alteration. The secretary was instructed to reply to this effect, and also to state that the Bakery would stop supplying bread to Lennoxtown as soon as that society was able to make other arrangements.

At the quarterly meeting the attention of the delegates was called by the chairman to the cases of one or two societies in Glasgow which were members of the Federation, but which purchased little or no bread from the Society. At this meeting,

also, attention was again called to the needs of the Federation for more capital. The work of Mr Craig in securing individual depositors had not yet begun to have any noticeable effect on the finances of the Society. At this time propaganda work was engaging the attention of the committee, and a conference of societies in and near Glasgow, was held for the purpose of inducing them to become better customers of the Federation. At one of the meetings about this time the chairman suggested that another meeting-place be got for their committee meetings, as the business was being overheard where they met at present. Societies were now beginning to join up more freely. Applications from some of the outlying societies were held up for consideration, but in November 1873 Kinning Park joined the Federation, taking up 100 shares, and a short time later London Road Society became a member.

#### UNINFORMED CRITICISM.

About this time the editor of the *Co-operative News* seems to have been criticising the Society's balance-sheet, for a discussion took place in committee on the subject, and it was duly minuted that "the remarks of the editor with regard to the balance-sheet were wrong; that it had been the same with the quarter previous, and he considered the editor should make himself better acquainted with the circumstances of the business before commenting on it." At this period the Federation had been caught on a rising market with a very small stock of flour on hand. The master bakers of the city had a meeting, but two of them refused to raise the price of bread, having evidently large stocks in hand. Flour was eight shillings a sack dearer than when the price of bread had been fixed. It was decided to maintain the price of bread in a line with Glasgow prices; but it was agreed that if a general rise took place in the various districts the members of committee should notify the manager so that he could act accordingly.

At the meeting of the committee which was held on 17th January 1874 the overdrawing by the Ironworks of their account with the Wholesale Society was referred to. It was stated that the amount overdrawn was £9,000. A lengthy conversation took place as to the advisability of having a more thorough check upon the transactions of the Bakery manager so as to

prevent the possibility of a like occurrence; but, after the matter had been discussed in all its bearings and various plans had been suggested, no definite decision was arrived at, except that the finance committee were instructed to make a regular inspection of the books and use every means to ascertain the real position of the Society. The delegates to the Wholesale meeting had also reported that it had been agreed by that society to charge 5 per cent. on overdue accounts after a certain date. This was going to hit the Baking Society heavily, and the committee expressed the opinion that they should not be liable as they were only receiving half bonus. There is no reason given, however, why they should be receiving only half bonus, as they had become members of the Wholesale Society quite a long time previously. Bridge of Weir and Kilbarchan societies were admitted members of the Federation, but the admission of Milngavie Society was held over for a further period. It was decided in February 1874 to recommend the delegates to the quarterly meeting to amend the rule relating to the representation of societies on the committee, as it was thought that with the increase in the number of the societies who were members of the Federation the committee was becoming unwieldy because of its size. From the beginning each society which joined the Federation had been entitled to be represented on the committee. There were now twenty societies in the Federation, and, although the average attendance at a committee meeting was about fourteen, the more the membership of the Federation was added to the larger the committee would become. After having been considered by the societies for a year, the recommendation of the committee was agreed to, and the membership of the committee was fixed at twelve—president, secretary, treasurer, and nine representatives of societies.

The trade of the Federation had fallen off somewhat during the fifth year, owing to the fact that several of the societies had been asked to withdraw and that the trade of one or two others was declining. The turnover was 7,514 sacks, as compared with 7,955 for the preceding year, thus showing a decline of 441 sacks. The average price of bread had been slightly higher, however, for the cash value of the goods sold was £22,153, an increase of £131. The average dividend paid had been 5½d.—



4d., 6d., 6d., and 6d. respectively for the four quarters—and the reserve fund had been more than doubled during the year, while depreciations to the amount of £719 had been made. The capital of the society was still very small in proportion to the turnover, however, being only £2,300. The societies themselves were mostly small; they had not very much capital to spare for investment, and those of them which were members of the U.C.B.S. had to divide that between that Federation and the S.C.W.S. Added to this was the fact that several of the societies which were members of the Federation were in a position which was gradually becoming more hopeless, with the result that not only were they unable to invest in the Federation, but they were barely able to pay for the bread they bought.

#### EXTENSIONS AND A FIRE.

At the quarterly meeting which took place in December 1874 it was decided that the erection of the flour loft, which had been held over for more than a year, should be proceeded with, but a disaster which befell the Society at the end of the month put a stop to the carrying out of that particular proposal for some time. This disaster was the burning down of the premises adjacent to the bakery and the property of the Society, which were being utilised as a bolt and rivet works by tenants of theirs. The reconstruction of this property occupied the attention of the committee for the next few months, and it was not until May that estimates for the completion of the flour loft were received and the contracts placed. When the accounts for the rebuilding of the burned-out property had all been submitted it was found that they were £70 less than the sum which had been received in insurances on the property, and the manager was presented with £5 and was granted a fortnight's leave of absence. The insurance on the property and stock of the Society was now increased by £2,000 to £7,000.

#### RESIGNATION OF MR CRAIG.

At the next meeting of the committee, held on 10th July 1875, a letter was received from Mr Craig, in which he stated that owing to a sudden change in health he was compelled to resign his position as cashier and manager. The committee were unanimous in their expressions of regret, and a deputation was

appointed to meet with Mr Craig and learn whether it would be possible for him to return to his position in the event of assistance being given in the office. At the next meeting this deputation reported that they had met Mr Craig, who stated that the medical advice he had received was that he should leave the country, and that he had decided to do so. They had therefore advertised the position. The committee thereupon recorded their appreciation of the work which Mr Craig had done for the Society in the following terms:—

“ While we accept Mr Craig’s resignation as manager, we desire to record our heartfelt sympathy with him in his circumstances and the high esteem in which he is held by all the members of this committee as an honest and upright individual, an intelligent and energetic man of business, and a faithful servant who, for the past two and a half years, has conducted the business to the great pecuniary advantage of all the members connected with it. While we regret the loss of such a valuable servant, we hope that he may secure in the country to which he is emigrating a restoration of health and strength, together with a due amount of worldly prosperity.”

Alas, it was not to be. No improvement took place in Mr Craig’s health from his residence abroad, and in a short time he was back in Glasgow again, his death taking place in the summer of 1877.

At the August quarterly meeting of the Society a grant of £20 was made to a testimonial which was being got up for Mr Craig, and the secretary was instructed to record in the minute of the proceedings that the grant was made

“ In recognition of his sterling worth as a man and the able business abilities he showed by the successful manner in which he conducted the affairs of this Society during the period he held the office of manager to the Society.”

Mr David Smith, who had been acting as secretary since Mr Borrowman had resigned from that office, was appointed manager, and Mr Thomas Slater, London Road Society, was elected secretary.

#### A BAD INVESTMENT.

In the middle of September there came an appeal from the Oakmill Society that the Baking Society should invest in its funds. The matter was delayed for one reason or another, but finally, at the quarterly meeting which was held in March 1876, it was agreed to invest £200. At this time the financial position

was improving every week. The profits on working were well over £30 per week, and the committee were not so chary of spending money as they had been in earlier years. Among other donations to which the Society agreed was one of £20 towards the expenses of the Co-operative Congress which was to be held in Glasgow in 1876. Several of the societies which were affiliated with the Baking Society were in a bad way at this time. Blairdardie Society had had their premises destroyed by fire, and a deputation was received by the Bakery directors. The deputation explained that the purpose of their visit was to get some consideration shown to them by giving them their regular supply of bread until they were able to complete their arrangements. The committee agreed that Blairdardie should receive their usual supply of bread for a month, at the end of which period the question would be further considered. Anderston Society also had fallen on evil days. For some time the Bakery committee had had considerable difficulty in securing prompt payment by that society for bread supplied to it, and early in 1876 they reduced by half the number of shares they held in the Bakery, as their membership was declining. They struggled on until the middle of 1878, but after taking stock in July of that year they gave up in despair and closed the shop. At the time when they closed down they were owing the Baking Society some money, and Mr Smith transferred that amount from their share account to their goods account. The chairman had, however, some doubt as to the legality of this action, and it was afterwards decided that should any of the other creditors object the Society would not take any action to uphold their claim. The debts of the Anderston Society were taken up by the Wholesale Society, however, and after a considerable amount of correspondence between the committees of the two Federations the balance of the share capital of Anderston Society was transferred by the Bakery committee to the Wholesale Society, the latter Federation agreeing to relieve the Baking Society from any responsibility they might incur by so doing.

At the beginning of the year 1878, Barrhead Society ceased to purchase bread from the Baking Society. This meant a reduction in turnover of nearly 600 dozens of bread every week, and for the time being put an end to all thoughts of branching out. Other societies, too, were going the way of Anderston,



and about this time the most remarkable point in the minutes of the Baking Society is their record of the names of societies which have long ceased to have any separate existence. Maryhill, Petershill, Bloomvale, Anderston, and Southern all lived a more or less precarious existence during the first decade of the Federation's existence, and all disappeared. One result of the failure of Anderston Society was an alteration in the rules of the Baking Society for the purpose of giving a lien on the shares of a debtor member. It was also decided about this time that societies which had ceased to be purchasers be removed from membership, and have their shares paid out to them. It was at the quarterly meeting held in December 1876 that the first mention is made of a practice which has since that time gladdened the hearts of many hundreds of weary delegates. At that meeting, Mr Neil, Kilbarchan, moved, and Mr M'Duff, Linwood, seconded a motion: "That at our quarterly meetings in future the delegates be supplied with tea." The motion was agreed to unanimously. The tenants of the bolt and rivet works in property owned by the Society wished for an extension of their lease or, alternatively, to be allowed to break their lease and remove, and the Society agreed to allow them to remove provided the removal was carried out in three months. At the end of May 1877 the Society's stable in St James Street was destroyed by fire and six horses were killed; at the same time some doubts were being entertained as to the stability of the bakery itself, as it was feared that the back wall was too weak for the load of flour it had to bear. Then the members of the committee were again being worried with complaints about the quality of the bread, and especially of the fine bread. When they came to compare their bread with that manufactured by competing bakers, however, they usually were of the opinion that the bread they were baking was as good as any.

#### GOOD NEWS.

At one of the meetings of the committee, held towards the end of 1877, an interesting report was given by the Johnstone representative, which was not without its humorous side. Nearly a year earlier the Bakery committee had installed machinery for biscuit baking, and had been building up a good trade. Nevertheless, the Johnstone committee had thought

## PAST PRESIDENTS



1. GABRIEL THOMSON.  
3. DONALD CAMERON.

2. WM. BARCLAY.  
4. ANDREW BROWN.

## PAST PRESIDENTS



1. ALEXANDER FRASER.  
3. DUNCAN M'CULLOCH.

2. JOHN FERGUSON:  
4. DANIEL H. GERRARD, J.P.



it necessary to inquire into complaints which were being made by their members. The biscuits manufactured by the Baking Society were sold in paper bags which contained 28 for 1/, and the members complained that other grocers gave 30 biscuits for 1/. The committee of Johnstone Society had carried out their investigation in a practical manner. They had purchased a bag of each of the other makers' biscuits and had weighed them. The result showed that the U.C.B.S. 28 biscuits were heavier by  $5\frac{1}{2}$  oz. than were the 30 biscuits of one maker, and were as heavy as 34 biscuits of another maker, while in each case the Society's biscuits were pronounced to be the better in quality. It is easy to imagine how heartening to a committee who were continuously being pestered with complaints about the quality of their wares such a report would be, and the chuckles with which the humorists amongst them would agree that it should be engrossed in the minutes "for the information of the delegates attending the quarterly meeting, so that they may be in a position to lay the matter before their respective committees; which may result in a considerable extension of this branch of trade."

#### MACHINERY INSTALLED.

For some months the committee had been discussing tentatively the installation of baking machinery, but without coming to any definite decision on the matter. In the beginning of 1878, however, they began to inquire into the subject in earnest, and appointed a committee to get all necessary particulars as to cost, effect on working expenses, and effect on the quality and appearance of the bread, of such machinery. After this committee had reported, the subject was discussed by the general committee and then remitted to the quarterly meeting. There the delegates ordered the report to be printed in circular form and sent out to the societies, so that the delegates might come to the next quarterly meeting with instructions. At the next meeting a motion that machinery be installed in the bakery was agreed to by a small majority. The amendment, "that it be not installed," seems to have been the last protest from those societies who wished a branch to be established at Paisley or Johnstone, but with the installation of machinery their last hope of achieving their purpose disappeared.

## GETTING RICH.

When the Society purchased the property in St James Street they were very poor and had to take a bond on the property, and when, a year or two later, the adjacent property in Park Street was purchased, the amount of the bond was increased, the total being £830. Now, in 1878, the committee found themselves in a position to pay out the bondholders, and accordingly this was done. The views of the committee on the subject of "bonds," as reported in the minutes, are interesting and worthy of quotation. They state :

"The uplifting of the bonds has entailed a considerable expense to this Society. The amount was advanced by four separate parties, who had each to be secured by a separate bond. We should draw a lesson from this which might be beneficial to us in the future, to make us beware that this or any of our respective local societies never have a 'bond' on any property where it is possible to get co-operative money."

At this point it may be interesting to note the apparent effect which the withdrawal of the trade of Barrhead Society had on the Bakery. For the ninth year the average turnover of the Society was 223 sacks per week, while in the tenth year this fell to an average of 188. The position is more fully illustrated by taking the totals for the two years ; that for the ninth year being 11,588 sacks, while that for the tenth year had fallen to 9,774 sacks. About this time the members were beginning to be uneasy about the Oakmill Society, in which they had invested £200, and at one quarterly meeting a delegate wished to know whether the committee considered the shares of this society a safe investment. The meeting was assured by Messrs Barclay and M'Nair, who were both members of the Oakmill Society, that they considered the investment quite a safe one. At the quarterly meeting in March 1879 the question was again raised, when Mr Alexander, the treasurer of the Baking Society, gave it as his opinion that "the loan capital in Oakmill Society was as safe as ever it was."

## FURTHER EXTENSIONS PROPOSED.

Meantime negotiations had been going on as the result of which the tenants in the bolt and rivet shop agreed to remove, and their boiler, engine, and shafting were purchased by the

Society for use in driving the machinery which was being installed in the bakery. A new roof was also being put on the bakery, and the question of erecting two new ovens in the premises vacated by their tenant was being considered, when the news came that Johnstone Society had decided to start baking on their own account. This put an end for the time being to any thought of erecting new ovens, as the withdrawal of this society would again reduce the trade to below the capacity of the ovens already erected, but, notwithstanding that fact, it was decided that the whole question should be submitted to the quarterly meeting for its decision. The 40th quarterly meeting was held on 1st March 1879. The society had now been in existence for ten years, and although the outlook at the moment was not very bright, yet worse times had already been met and overcome. Doubtless, the members of committee were looking forward to the time when other societies at a distance from the centre would begin baking on their own account, but they knew also that the membership of the societies in the immediate vicinity of the Bakery was increasing, and hoped to recoup themselves in this way. At the quarterly meeting a general discussion on the question of building new ovens, in view of the fact that Johnstone Society was withdrawing, took place, but no decision was come to.

#### THE RESULTS OF TEN YEARS' WORK.

In considering the trade for the ten years during which the Society had been established, it is to be noted that that for the ninth year was the greatest, 11,588 sacks having been turned into bread and biscuits in that year. The tenth year was the first in which there was a fall in the turnover, each of the first nine years showing a steady increase over that immediately preceding, and the reason for the drop in the tenth year was so obvious and so insurmountable that no uneasiness arose in consequence. From the second quarter in the seventh year the dividend each quarter was almost uniformly a shilling or over, and by the end of the tenth year no less than £8,051 had been allocated in dividend, as well as £75 as dividend to non-members; while £1,548 had been paid as interest on share and loan capital. Thus in the first ten years, those associated with the Bakery had received nearly £10,000, which they certainly



would not have received had the Baking Federation not been started. In addition, they had a valuable property represented by shares and loans amounting to £5,706, while private loan-holders had also £544 invested. At the same time, in addition to the employees being paid wages equal to those paid elsewhere in the trade, £766 had been divided amongst them in the form of bonus. The directors were also extremely liberal in their depreciations, for during the ten years £4,270 had been written off property, stocks, machinery, fittings, and live stock. This made for the stability of the Society. In view of the fact that the capital was small and the capital outlay comparatively large, the financial policy adopted of devoting large sums to depreciation instead of paying them away in dividends was a sound one, and enabled the committee to undertake with a light heart extensions which would otherwise have caused them considerable anxiety. They had established on a sound financial basis a structure which was to prove of lasting benefit to the co-operative movement, and which was to bear no uncertain testimony in future years to the ability of the builders and to the soundness of the principles on which they were carrying on their business.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ST JAMES STREET: CONGESTION

A FALL IN MEMBERSHIP—RELATIONS WITH EMPLOYEES—CANVASSING FOR TRADE—GOOD BREAD—GROUND ANNUAL PURCHASED—DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT—PRESIDENT AND TREASURER RETIRE—KEEPING DOWN PRICES—OAKMILL FAILURE—A PECULIAR COMPLAINT FROM KINNING PARK—FURTHER EXTENSIONS—COSTLY LITIGATION—TRANSFERABLE CAPITAL—STILL FURTHER EXTENSIONS.

IN the preceding chapter the decline in the turnover of the Federation, and the circumstances to which that decline was due, have been detailed. During the latter half of the tenth year three societies had withdrawn or been paid out, and the membership of the Federation, which had consisted of twenty-six societies at the beginning of the year, consisted of only twenty-three at the end. For three years no new societies had joined, and the increase which had taken place in the trade was due entirely to increased membership of the societies which were members of the Federation, and to a growing demand on the part of the members for co-operatively produced bread. Two of the societies whose names had been struck off the roll had been little more than nominal members for years, and their loss scarcely affected the trade at all, while, by the beginning of the eleventh year, the substantial decrease which had resulted from the withdrawal of Barrhead Society showed signs of being completely overcome. The turnover, which had averaged 185 sacks per week in the last two quarters of 1878, as compared with 226 in the third quarter of 1877, rose in the first quarter of 1879 to 207 sacks, and by the end of that year was up to 216 $\frac{3}{4}$  sacks. The prospects for the immediate future were not too bright, however, as Johnstone Society, in reply to a letter which had been sent by the Bakery board, stated that they had definitely decided to begin baking for themselves. On 21st February 1880 the committee had before them the formal notice from the society of their withdrawal from the Federation, which was accepted.

At the same meeting Mr Green, who had been the representative of Johnstone Society on the committee for eight years, was thanked by the committee for the great interest he had taken in, and the valuable services he had rendered to, the Baking Society. Mr Small, Johnstone, who had been one of the auditors since the beginning of 1876, had resigned six months earlier, in view of the fact that his society proposed withdrawing from the Federation.

Notwithstanding the fact that the withdrawal of Johnstone Society was imminent, and that the quarterly meeting of delegates had given no decision on the subject when it was before them at the fortieth quarterly meeting, the committee, by a majority of 9 votes to 2, decided at their next meeting to proceed with the erection of two ovens additional in the premises just vacated by their tenants. At the same time the work of installing machinery was proceeding, and by the middle of the summer the work was completed, as was also that of reslating the bakery roof. The whole of this work was carried out at a cost of almost a thousand pounds, and placed the Federation in a position to handle a considerably larger trade than they were doing at the moment.

#### RELATIONS WITH EMPLOYEES.

At the same time they were considering the wages of their bakers and vanmen. These workers had always been paid the wages current in the trade, and now it was reported to the committee that the wages of bakers in the city had been reduced by 2/ per week. The subject was discussed on several occasions, being postponed month after month for lack of precise information, and perhaps, also because they were loth to take the step of reducing wages. Finally, a decision was arrived at. The information was to the effect that nineteen bakers, eight vanmen and stable hands, and four employees in the breadroom and office were receiving a total of £46, 16s. per week. The details of the bakery wages showed that the ordinary bakers were being paid 29/ per week; the ovenmen, 32/; the stockkeeper, 33/; the biscuit baker, 35/; and the under foreman, £2, 2s.; and it was agreed that the wages all round be reduced by 2/ per week. The vanmen who had charge of two-horse vans had their wages reduced from 27/ to 25/; one man who had 24/ had his wage



reduced to 23/; and those who were being paid 21/ had no reduction made. Naturally, this reduction did not meet with the approval of the employees, but for three months they do not seem to have taken any action. At the end of that period, however, the committee were memorialised by both bakers and vanmen, and the request made that their wages should be brought up to the former figures. In reply to the vanmen's request, the committee said that after careful consideration they could see no good reason why they should alter their former decision. The reply to the bakers was couched in somewhat different terms, but it was to the same effect. It was stated that the reduction was entirely due to the state of the labour market in the country. From the reports which had appeared in the public press, it seemed that similar reductions had been made in other baking establishments, and, as the Federation had advanced wages when advances were given elsewhere, when reductions were made they were only following the usual course which regulated wages in the trade. The minute continues: "But to show that we have no wish to take any undue advantage of their position, if they can establish to the satisfaction of this committee that the United Baking Society are paying less than the standard wage current in Glasgow, we as a committee would have much pleasure in reconsidering the whole question at next meeting. Until that is done we adhere to our former agreement."

#### CANVASSING FOR TRADE.

Meantime, the committee had not been idle. They visited a number of societies which were taking bread from them, but not all that they required, with the view of getting them to place the whole of their orders with the Society. They also visited several societies which were within a comparatively short distance of Glasgow, and one of these—Renfrew Equitable—was so pleased with the quality of the bread supplied that after a comparatively short trial they agreed to take the whole of their supplies from the Federation. This was cheering news, and offset some of the other worries which were cropping up occasionally. Flour at this time was rising very rapidly in price. During the quarter it had risen by 10/6 per sack, the last rise being 4/6, and the bread had, in consequence, to be advanced in price—the common bread to 7d. per 4-lb. loaf and the "fine"

to 8d. Some trouble was also being experienced with the engine which they had put in. New rings had been put on the piston rod, and the engineer informed them that this would require to be done about once in every six months. At first the committee were sceptical, but inquiries elsewhere confirmed the engineer's opinion. The trade at this time was fairly prosperous, for the profit realised was averaging about £30 per week. They were very particular also to see that their financial position was kept on safe lines, and spent a good part of one night discussing the allocation of the cost of the additions to the property to the various accounts. The result was that they agreed to add the cost of the new machinery to fixed stock account, the cost of the new ovens and division wall to property account, to be depreciated according to rule, while the cost of reroofing the bakery and refitting the breadroom they decided to pay out of revenue. The latter decision was challenged at next quarterly meeting, but on a division the delegates by a large majority upheld the decision of the committee. Towards the end of 1879 they made another comparison of their bread with that of their competitors, and came to the conclusion that, as the minute puts it, "the Society's bread was superior both in shape and colour, while the members had great reason to be satisfied with the great improvement which had been made in the french and pan bread. A unanimous expression of opinion was given that it had been the best comparison they could remember where the Bakery bread stood in such a pre-eminently favourable position." After making due allowance for the partiality of the committee for bread of their own manufacture, it would appear that the expectations of good to be derived from the installation of machinery were being realised. The committee also this year issued calendars to the societies. This had been done on at least one previous occasion.

#### THE GROUND ANNUAL.

At one of the last meetings held in 1879 Mr Slater drew attention to the fact that the payment of the ground annual for the land on which the bakery was built was costing the Society £68 a year. He suggested that this should be bought out, giving the probable cost as about £1,400, and also that the necessary money might be raised by means of loans from

societies and individuals connected with the movement, pointing out that it would be a good investment for the Society and a safe one for those who lent the money. The suggestion was very favourably received by the members of the committee, and was brought to the notice of the delegates at the first general meeting of the Society. There the committee were instructed to put it on the programme of business for the annual meeting of the Society. At that meeting, however, the question was shelved for the time being, a motion being agreed to "that they delay at present taking any active steps to purchase the ground annual, and that the matter be left in the hands of the committee to bring it up again when they consider that the Society is in a position to do it with advantage." It was not until a meeting of committee held on 18th November 1882 that the subject was raised again, and again this was done by the secretary in the form of a definite motion "that steps be taken to purchase the ground annual." He pointed out that they were paying £68 per annum to persons outside who had no other interest in the movement, and that this sum would be retained for the benefit of the Federation, while the purchase would also assist to a certain extent in the solution of the problem of what to do with their surplus capital. The other members of the committee agreed, and it was decided to call a special meeting at the end of the 56th quarterly meeting to consider the question. At this meeting the committee were empowered to make the purchase at once, and entered into negotiations with the proprietors, with the result that after a considerable amount of negotiation and delay the Society became the owner of the ground annual at a cost of £1,652, 2s. 6d., being twenty-three and a half years' purchase of the sum paid annually. The Society was now so wealthy that the directors were able to pay this sum from the bank balance without interfering with their deposits in the Wholesale Society.

#### DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT.

For some reason which is not very easy to understand after the lapse of time the committee did not treat alike all the societies which withdrew from the Federation. For instance, Barrhead Society had no deduction made from its capital on withdrawing, while Johnstone Society, two years later, was



asked to pay  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. toward the reserve and depreciation funds. As the circumstances which led to the withdrawal of the two societies were practically similar, and as the financial position of the Federation had changed, if at all, for the better in the interval, to find a reason for the differentiation is a little difficult. Parkhead Society, which withdrew shortly after Johnstone, were charged 10 per cent., but in this case the society had not been regular or consistent customers of the Federation, and at the meeting at which intimation of their withdrawal was given very serious complaints of their unco-operative methods were made by the sub-committee.

#### PRESIDENT AND TREASURER RETIRE.

The year 1880 was notable for the retiral of two officials of the Society who had given long and faithful service. Mr Alexander, who had been treasurer almost from the beginning, was defeated at the annual meeting held in March, Mr James M'Murran, Glasgow Eastern, receiving the greater number of votes. At the same meeting Mr Andrew Brown, who had been president of the Federation from 1872, intimated that it was not his intention to seek re-election, his reason for this course being that his society, Paisley Provident, had decided to open a bakery of their own. At the following quarterly meeting the delegates decided to present Mr Brown with £30 as a token of esteem for the manner in which he had conducted the business of the Society during the years in which he had been president. This decision called forth a protest from Paisley Equitable Society—in the first place from the committee of the society, and later by the authority of a quarterly meeting—but the committee of the Baking Federation held that as the decision had been that of the delegates the matter was one in which they could not interfere, and in due course the presentation to Mr Brown took place. Mr Alexander Fraser, Busby, was elected president in succession to Mr Brown, and during his term of office the Society entered on a period of prosperity much greater than any which had been experienced hitherto.

By the withdrawal of Johnstone and Parkhead societies the membership of the Federation now numbered only twenty-one societies, and for four quarters there was no addition. But although societies did not join up with the Federation very

rapidly customers on a non-member basis were coming in. First there was a request from Allander Society for supplies, coupled with the promise that in a very short time an application for membership would follow, and the committee agreed to supply them provided that the accounts were settled fortnightly. In September the Society was admitted to membership. Owing to the coming withdrawal of Paisley Provident Society the committee took energetic steps to make good the deficit in the output which would occur when this took place. They selected Greenock district as a likely field to tap, with such good results that Greenock East-End Society soon became purchasers and were admitted to membership early in the following year. Port-Glasgow Society followed, and after a little Ann Street Society, Greenock, became a customer, to be followed shortly afterwards by Dalmuir, Clydebank, and Cowlares societies. Then came Clippens Society and Greenock Industrial. To get in all these societies, however, had taken nearly two years, and there had been decided fluctuations in the output during the period. With the withdrawal of Paisley Provident Society, notwithstanding the increased trade which came from Greenock, the number of sacks baked had dropped from 235 in the 48th quarter to 186 in the 51st; then there began a gradual rise until the 63rd quarter showed an average output of 267 sacks per week. The withdrawal of Paisley Provident Society had meant a loss to the Baking Society of trade amounting to about £2,000 a quarter.

#### KEEPING DOWN PRICES.

There is nothing new under the sun. During the war period it has been common knowledge that the U.C.B.S. was responsible for keeping down the price of bread when the other master bakers desired to raise it. This was not an entirely new role for the Society to play, however. In 1880 it was successful in forcing the bakers of Glasgow to reduce the price of bread within a fortnight after having raised it, because of the Society's refusal to raise the price also.

#### THE OAKMILL INVESTMENT.

The members of the committee had been somewhat chary about investing any money in the Oakmill Society, although it was finally decreed by the quarterly general meeting of the

Society that this should be done. For some time there had been reports that all was not well with this society, and more than once questions had been asked in the Baking Society's general meetings on the subject. At length matters were coming to a crisis, however, and a circular was issued to the societies by the S.C.W.S. in which that society wished to be informed how much they were prepared to give to Oakmill Society on loan. The Baking Society's committee replied that they could do nothing until they had consulted the general meeting of members. The circular had been issued in June, and in August the committee decided to withdraw the amount of interest on their loan to Oakmill Society which had been allowed to accumulate, and now amounted to £47. At this meeting it was also decided that the question of a further loan be not brought before the quarterly meeting. Shortly afterwards the society went into liquidation, and when the final settlement was made the Baking Society found that they had lost £122, 11s. 8d. This sum was liquidated by being paid from the reserve fund.

In 1882 a disaster befell Barrhead Society, their bakery being burned down, and during the time it was being rebuilt they got their bread from the U.C.B.S. This meant an immediate increase of twenty sacks per week in the turnover, which was of importance at the time; but what was of still more importance, it served to lessen the breach which had opened between the Federation and the society and paved the way for the return of the society to the fold at a later date.

During the earlier years of the Society's history the mention of letters in "red ink," sent as reminders to societies that their indebtedness to the Federation was exceeding reasonable limits, was frequent in the minutes, but in these later years such "red ink" circulars do not seem to have been sent. At anyrate, mention of them no longer appears. This did not mean, unfortunately, that all the societies were now sufficiently alive to the need of paying their debts promptly and that they had the cash at hand wherewith to pay them. The position of some of the societies was still a matter of grave concern to the Baking Society's committee, and in one or two cases societies went into liquidation. One such society was Allander, which had only joined the Federation in 1881, and which went into liquidation towards the end of 1883. From this society they got one shilling



in the pound. Another case was that of Petershill Society, which went into liquidation early in the same year and which had paid its debt to the Baking Society in full.

At one time there was trouble with Kinning Park Society of a peculiar kind. The committee of that society sent a letter to the Baking Society's committee, in which it was stated that the impression in that society was "That if a situation is wanted in the Bakery, the most effective way to secure it is to denounce Co-operation, and the Kinning Park Society in particular." The board, in discussing this letter, expressed the opinion that it was a matter with which they had nothing to do. It was no business of theirs where their employees did or did not purchase their goods. This sound business rule is one which is still in operation in all well-regulated societies. At the same time, it must be admitted that when a man is working for a principle as well as for a livelihood, his work is likely to be better done. There are still workers in the movement, however, who, while professing to work for it, treat it worse than they would be allowed to treat a private employer, by denying it the efficient, loyal, and painstaking service which they would be compelled to render for wages alone. No more was heard of Kinning Park complaint. The terms of the letter were probably an exaggeration of whatever grievance there was.

#### FURTHER EXTENSIONS.

For some years the fluctuations in the trade of the Society had been such that further extensions had been unnecessary, but, by the end of 1882, the congestion had become so great that it was necessary that further baking accommodation should be procured at an early date. This raised a debate as to the respective merits of increasing the oven accommodation at St James Street or putting down a branch bakery at Greenock to supply the societies in that area. The societies in the Greenock and Port-Glasgow area were all members of the Federation, but there were both difficulty and expense entailed in sending the bread from Glasgow, and, especially in winter, when there was fog on the river, there was occasionally irritating delay. The result of the debate was that a committee was appointed to consider the different schemes and report.

When the special committee reported on the various points which had been remitted to them to discuss there was considerable difference of opinion amongst the members of the Bakery board as to which was the best plan to adopt. Finally, on a vote being taken, it was agreed, by a majority, to recommend to the general meeting the erection of a branch bakery in Greenock. When the question came before the delegates at the quarterly meeting, however, the scheme for a branch in Greenock was not adopted, and it was decided to proceed with the erection of two additional ovens at St James Street.

In 1884, however, the trade was again outgrowing the accommodation, and in November of that year the committee decided to rent a bakehouse in Scotland Street in order to relieve the congestion. The membership of the Federation was again up to 26 societies, and the output at the end of 1884 was 281 sacks per week.

For a considerable part of this period the Federation were buying much of the flour they used elsewhere than from the Wholesale Society, and discussions on the subject took place from time to time. The contention of the Bakery board was that they were being asked by the Wholesale Society to pay considerably more for flour than they could buy the same quality for elsewhere, and from the minute of an interview which took place between representatives of the two boards, it appears that the Wholesale representatives agreed that this was the case at the time. The Wholesale board could not see their way to make any alteration at the time on their method of charging, however. Nevertheless, it is gratifying to know that in a short time the Wholesale Society was in a position to meet competitors on level terms, and towards the end of 1884 a large proportion of the flour used was purchased from the Federation.

#### COSTLY LITIGATION.

Early in 1884, the Society became involved in a lawsuit. An accident took place through which a horse belonging to the Glasgow Tramway and Omnibus Company was killed, and as it was found impossible to come to any arrangement which would be satisfactory to both parties, the Sheriff-Substitute for Renfrewshire was called upon to decide. The committee were agreeable to take responsibility for the accident, which had been

caused by one of their horses running away while being unyoked. The Tramway Company valued the animal killed at £35, while the veterinary surgeon employed by the Society to value it immediately after the accident placed its value at £16, but the Tramway Company manager refused to make any concession. After the dispute had dragged on for a month, during which the case was taken into Court and the Society lodged £20 in full of all claims, the Tramway Company's agent offered to try and induce his clients to accept £30 in full of all claims, each party to pay their own expenses. This offer the Society refused to accept, but when the case came before the Sheriff-Substitute he decreed for £35; at the same time passing severe strictures on the method in vogue at the bakery when horses were being yoked and unyoked. An appeal to the Sheriff-Principal was lodged, but he also decided against the Society, with the result that, instead of settling for £35, they had also a heavy bill to pay for expenses.

At the quarterly meeting held in June 1884, some reorganisation of the work of the office took place. As a preliminary step, the office of treasurer to the Society was abolished. With the exception of a short period at the beginning, this office had been held by two men—Mr Alexander of Paisley and Mr M'Murrin of Glasgow Eastern Society. At the meeting at which the office of treasurer was abolished, an attempt was made to make all the capital of the Society transferable, but this proposal was defeated by a narrow majority; fifty-eight delegates voting for the proposal and thirty-two against it. As a two-thirds majority was necessary, the vote in favour was six short of the necessary number.

#### TRANSFERABLE CAPITAL.

During the summer of 1884 the Society was experimenting with a new form of barm, produced by a patent process. The results of the experiments, however, were not satisfactory. The new barm was found to be no improvement on the old, while the recipe would cost £5, and thereafter there was to be a royalty of a halfpenny per sack of flour used, which was to continue for a year, so the committee decided that no advantage would accrue to the Society by adopting the new system. About the same time the committee were in correspondence with

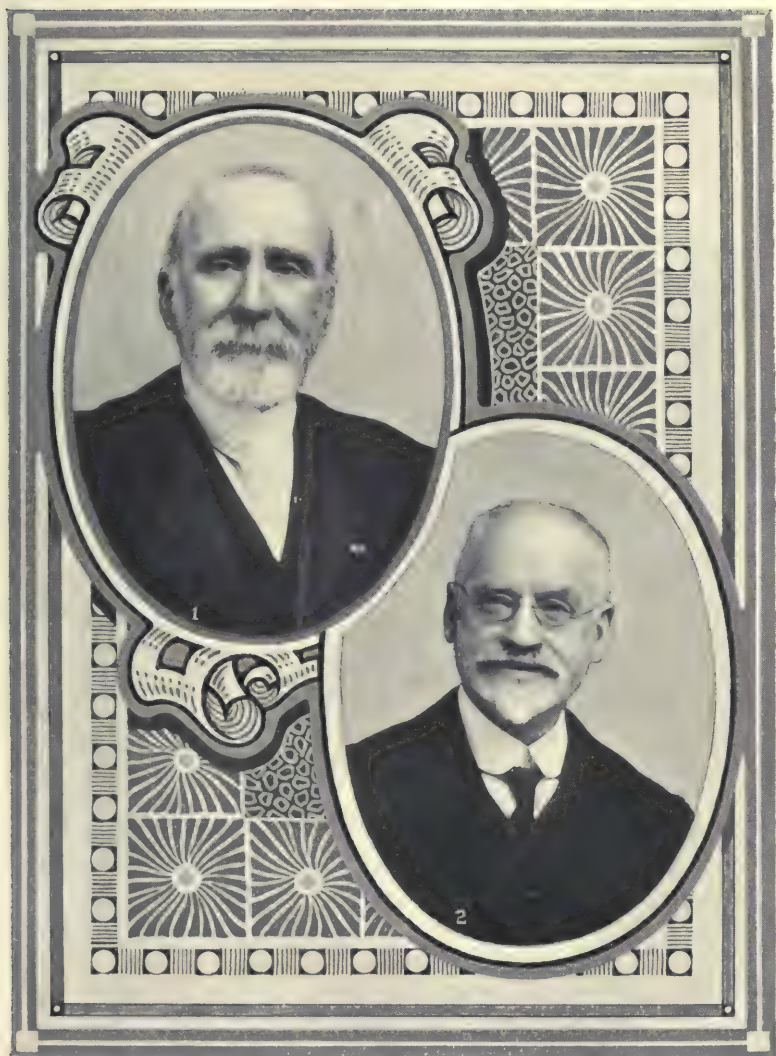


Mr E. V. Neale on the question of the best method to be adopted for making the loan capital of the Society secure. They considered the information they received from Mr Neale so valuable that they decided to print it and send a copy to each member society.

Notwithstanding the difficulties with which they were meeting, consequent on their shortage of oven accommodation, the committee were ever zealous in their endeavours to get new trade from societies which were not members and to increase the trade of those which were. During the summer months they caused a number of letters to be sent to societies, requesting that deputations should be received, and by this means they were able to secure increased trade from some of the societies which were not as loyal as they might have been. Arising out of the correspondence with Mr Neale, it was agreed at the September quarterly meeting in 1884 to appoint a special committee to go into the whole question of the capital of the Society, with special reference to that held on loan, and with power to consult a Scottish legal authority on the subject, the committee to report to the December quarterly meeting. The special committee consulted the Lord Advocate on the subject, with the result that, at a special meeting which was held in March of the following year, the whole share capital of the Society was made transferable, while the interest on loans was reduced from 5 per cent. to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

#### STILL FURTHER EXTENSIONS.

It was becoming increasingly evident that the St James Street bakery had reached the limit of its usefulness to the Society. Although biscuit baking and the baking of pastry and smalls had been transferred to the Scotland Street premises, it was becoming impossible for St James Street to meet the demand for bread, and therefore another small bakery situated in Hill Street was rented for a time. This was only a temporary arrangement, however, and could not be expected to continue. The Bakery was now turning over considerably more than 300 sacks of flour per week, and the trade was increasing at such a rapid rate that it was practically impossible to keep pace with it in the premises as they then were. The need for a new bakery was clamant, and much consideration was given to the question ere a decision was arrived at. That decision, when



1. DANIEL H. GERRARD, J.P.,  
President.

2. JAMES BAIN,  
Secretary.

## AUDITORS



1. WM. H. JACK, F.S.A.A

2. JOHN M. BIGGAR.



come to, proved to be the most momentous in the history of the Federation, and may well form the subject of another chapter.

During practically the whole of the period which is embraced in this chapter, two gentlemen, still well known, active in the movement and highly respected—Messrs Allan Gray and Robert Macintosh—acted as auditors for the Federation, and during their period of office made several suggestions affecting the financial stability of the Federation, which, when put into operation, helped materially to make it the strong concern financially that it is to-day. In particular, they were the means of getting the depreciation placed on a sounder basis than it had been for some time. Investigations which took place more than once had the result of showing the committee that the rate of depreciation was not enough, as the book value of fixed and live stock and machinery was greater than the valuation showed that it should be. Ultimately, this was put right, and the finances of the Society were established on a firm footing.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### M'NEIL STREET.

INCREASING TRADE—THE DIRECTORS' DILEMMA—M'NEIL STREET GROUND PURCHASED—THE NEW BAKERY: BUILDING DIFFICULTIES—THE OPENING CEREMONY—AN UP-TO-DATE BAKERY—PROPAGANDA WORK—RECOGNISING LOYAL SERVICE—A STABLE INSPECTOR—FINANCE—AN INVESTMENT—THE PURCHASE OF FLOUR—A SOCIAL MEETING AND ITS OBJECT—A RIGHT-OF-WAY CASE—THE NEW BAKERY COMPLETED—A NEW VENTURE—THE CHAIRMAN RETIRES—ALL-ROUND INCREASES.

AT the end of the preceding chapter we saw that the trade of the Society had become so large that it was forcing the question of a new bakery on the attention of the directors. With the purpose in view of securing the necessary capital, the sub-committee advertised the St James Street premises for sale, but the only offer they received was one to lease the premises. As this was of no use for their purpose at the moment nothing further was done. Circumstances, and the policy of the committee, were responsible for the still more rapid increase of trade. In the beginning of 1885 the price of flour went up with a rush, but as the Federation was in the happy position of having bought a large quantity of flour just before the rise they were able to continue selling their bread at the old price while the other bakers had to raise it, with the result that the trade continued to increase very rapidly. One of the results of this rapid increase in trade was that the Society was once again placed in the position of being compelled to refuse orders because of its inability to execute them. For this reason Blantyre and Burnbank societies, which had made proposals to join the Federation, had to be refused for the time being.

The directors were literally at their wits end. They could not sell their premises. Unless they got new premises they could not hope to provide for the trade which came pouring in in ever-increasing volume, and they did not know what was the best thing to do. To begin with they got a firm of architects,

Messrs Bruce & Hay, to prepare a sketch plan for a new bakery on the St James Street site which would contain twenty-four ovens, together with ample accommodation for storing flour, and stables, a breadroom, and a van yard. When the architects came to prepare their plans, however, they found that the space available was not large enough to give all the accommodation desired. The plans, when submitted, showed a bakery with twenty-three ovens, stable accommodation for nineteen horses, van shed, offices, breadroom, and store, and the cost was estimated at £6,200.

The committee decided that before they would proceed further they would consider carefully the progress which had been made by the Society in the ten years which had elapsed since 1875, and this study of the work which had been done showed that the ratio of increase in trade had grown larger in the two years immediately preceding 1885, while the trade which was being done at the moment warranted them in believing that this rate of progress would be maintained. This being so, the conclusion at which they arrived was that, even if they did build at St James Street, only a few years would elapse before the accommodation would be too small. They decided, therefore, to bring their difficulties before the quarterly meeting and leave the decision with them.

#### PURCHASE OF M'NEIL STREET GROUND.

Three schemes were laid before the quarterly meeting, including the rebuilding of the St James Street premises, which, however, the directors deprecated. The proposals were discussed at length by the meeting, but no decision was arrived at, the question being remitted back to the committee for further consideration and inquiry. The questions which were remitted for consideration were: The cost of land in or near Glasgow, and the cost of erecting thereon a bakery large enough to meet the wants of all the members; or, alternatively, the cost of land in or near Paisley, and the cost of erecting a branch bakery there large enough to meet the demands for bread from the societies in the West.

There was evidently a desire to reopen the question of a branch in Paisley, which had been closed since the end of 1876, but the delegates to the special meeting which was held on



11th July to hear the report of the committee on the question of whether a new central bakery should be built or whether they should content themselves with a branch in or near Paisley, decided by an overwhelming majority in favour of a central bakery in Glasgow, and remitted to the committee the selection of a site.

The sub-committee went about their business of securing a site expeditiously, with the result that at the meeting which was held on 22nd August they were able to inform the committee of two sites, one in Fauld's Park, Govan, the price of which was 12/6 per yard; and the other at M'Neil Street, costing 15/6 per square yard. It was also intimated that the latter site had some buildings on it which might be of use to the Society. The members of the committee visited both sites, and after having inspected them came to the conclusion that the M'Neil Street one was best suited to their purpose, and empowered the sub-committee to offer £4,000 for it, with power to go to £4,500 if necessary. At the meeting of committee which was held on 19th September it was intimated that the "Nursery Mills," M'Neil Street, had been bought for £4,500, that a deposit of £500 had been made, and that the keys had been given up to the Society. The property had been insured for £1,000. The engine and boiler in the building were inspected, and Messrs Bruce & Hay were instructed to prepare plans of a bakery containing twenty-four ovens, a travelling oven for biscuits, and three or four ovens for pastry, as well as van sheds, stabling, etc. On 13th October the committee empowered the officials to pay the full cost of the site and take possession of the title deeds. It was also decided to dispose of the boilers contained in the property, and at a later date, of the engines; the total sum received being £207, 10s.

When the plans for the new bakery were submitted to the committee decided disapproval was expressed, on the ground that the site was not being utilised to the best advantage, that the existing buildings were not being used, although they were worth from £1,200 to £1,300, and that provision was made in the plan for a courtyard out of all proportion to the requirements of the Society. It was decided to ask the architect to prepare other plans, and instructions were given that the buildings at present on the site were not to be interfered with,

and that another architect was also to be asked to prepare plans, with the same instructions. At the same time it was agreed to sell the St James Street property for £4,500 if a sale could be effected, and if not that it be rented, the rent to be £300 per annum. For the next week or two the committee met weekly. On plans being submitted for the second time those of Messrs Bruce & Hay were adopted, with some alterations suggested by the committee, and a building committee was appointed to supervise the work of erecting the bakery. Some little difficulty was experienced, however, in getting the plans through the Dean of Guild Court. Objection was taken at the Court to the fact that the stable gangway was not fireproof, and the plans were sent back for alteration. Presumably all was in order at their next presentation, for nothing further appears in the minutes on the subject. An inspector of works was appointed for the job, contracts were fixed up, and the work commenced. The financing of the building scheme was also considered by the committee, and they agreed to appeal to the societies for the necessary money, at the same time recommending, as an inducement to the societies to subscribe, that the interest on the loan capital be increased from  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to 5 per cent. This recommendation was agreed to by the delegates to the quarterly meeting, and the committee were also empowered to reopen the private loan fund if they considered such a course advisable. One result of the decision of the quarterly meeting was that at the committee meeting held a fortnight later it was reported that already £2,080 had been received as loans from three societies—Thornliebank, Glasgow Eastern, and Kinning Park—while 150 additional shares had been allocated. At the same meeting the Secretary intimated an offer from Kilbarchan Court, A.O.F., offering £400 on loan. This kind offer the committee had to decline, however, on the ground that the loan fund was as yet only open to Co-operative societies.

#### BUILDING DIFFICULTIES.

The building work was proceeding satisfactorily, but the same could not be said of the joiner work. The Dean of Guild Court had been pushing the Society to get the work of barricading the building and laying down a pavement done.

The joiner had erected the barricade and made the footpath in M'Neil Street, but refused to do this in Govan Street, stating that he would "go to Court first." The Society had written to him, informing him that if he did not do the work, for which he had contracted, the Society would have it done and deduct the cost from his account. There was also delay in pushing on the joiner work in connection with the building itself, which was delaying the remainder of the work of building.

The duties of the committee at this time were arduous and engrossing. They had set out with the intention of erecting a bakery which would be second to none in the city, and with this object in view they were not too bigoted to change their minds when any suggestion was brought to their notice which was likely to be an improvement on the course they had decided on. One such alteration was in connection with the new engine for driving their machinery. The fact that the engine which they had decided on was too powerful for the work for which it was needed had been brought to their notice, and they at once made inquiries and consulted with the maker. After he had given the matter his attention this also was his opinion, and he therefore offered them a less powerful engine at a reduction in price of £65, and they decided to have it put down. Then "with the object of securing the latest improvements in bakery machinery, a deputation, consisting of the managers, foreman baker, and two members of the committee, were appointed to visit the exhibition of bakery machinery at Edinburgh, see the machines at work, and report." As one of the results of this visit machinery to the value of £500 was purchased.

The committee continued to complain of the slow progress which was being made with the new building, and the architects were appealed to to endeavour to get the contractors to speed up by putting more men on the job, but with little success. The lessees of the St James Street premises had been promised entry by Whitsunday 1887, but as time passed the committee began to get anxious about their ability to fulfil this part of their contract. The engines and machinery, also, were ready to put in, but this could not be done because the other contractors were behind with their sections. So bad



did the position become that ultimately the committee were forced to put the matter into the hands of their agent. However, this difficulty also was overcome without further friction. The lessees of St James Street bakery now began to press for entry, and the committee were compelled to ask for their forbearance, as they were afraid that the new bakery would not be ready for occupancy at the time stated.

It was agreed that a social meeting be held on the occasion of the opening of the new premises, and that the premises be open to the general public for inspection during the whole of the opening day. A band was engaged to play selections in the courtyard for three hours in the afternoon, and the building was decorated with flags. Finally, such progress was made with the equipment of the premises that the committee were in a position to fix 21st May as the opening day, and preparations for the great event went forward rapidly.

#### THE OPENING CEREMONY.

The opening ceremony is said to have been one of the most imposing Co-operative functions ever held in Scotland. The buildings were gay with flags and bannerettes, while a military band discoursed sweet music in the courtyard. The premises were thrown open to the public, and it is estimated that more than 30,000 people passed through the building between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. More than 500 delegates were present at the luncheon, when Mr Alexander Fraser, president of the Society, presided. Stirring speeches were delivered, and the premises were declared open amid a scene of great enthusiasm.

In the evening a monster social meeting took place in the Wellington Palace, at which there were present upwards of 1,000 people. Speeches were delivered by Mr William Maxwell, chairman of the S.C.W.S., and Mr Henry Murphy, Lanark. It was generally admitted that the demonstration had proved the greatest advertisement which Co-operation in Scotland had ever received, and that the virtues of the movement had been brought to the notice of thousands of people who had never before given it a thought. The result was that a great impetus was given to the movement in Glasgow, and the great development of Co-operation in the city which has made Glasgow a stronghold of the movement began about that time. No doubt

further stimulus has been given from time to time—the Congress of 1890, the opening of the S.C.W.S. central premises in Morrison Street, the Seaside Homes bazaar, the various Co-operative festivals—all had an influence—but to the Baking Society much of the original impulse is due, just as to it also—through the refusal of the directors to increase the price of bread unnecessarily in the early months of the war—the latest impulse must be credited.

#### AN UP-TO-DATE BAKERY.

The bakery was planned on what were then the most modern lines. It contained twenty-eight ovens. Twenty-four of these were Scotch bread ovens, while three were specially built for the production of pastry, scones, etc., and one was a revolving oven for the production of pan loaves. In the original plan there was a proposal for a travelling biscuit oven, and space for this had been left in the bakery. The flour loft was on the top floor of the building, and everything was arranged for convenience and rapidity of output. The facilities provided for an output of some 700 sacks per week, and when the new premises were planned it was thought that there would be ample accommodation to meet the requirements of the Society for a number of years, but so great had been the development of the Society's business while the bakery was in course of erection, and so rapid was the increase when the new premises were opened, that soon the question of extensions was again to the front.

#### PROPAGANDA WORK.

In tracing in a connected form the work of the committee in deciding on and carrying through the work of erecting the new bakery, however, we have been compelled to leave other important work unnoted. Just at the time when the discussion of the proposals for a new bakery was taking place information was received from Kilbarchan Society of that society's intention to begin baking on their own account. The letter from the society was read to the meeting which was called to consider the erection of a new bakery, but had no effect on the decision, and shortly afterwards the Kilbarchan people changed their minds about baking for themselves and decided to remain members of the Federation. It was otherwise with some

of the societies further west. Greenock East End Society withdrew in September, Greenock Central and Paisley Equitable soon afterwards, while Partick Society was in a bad way, and a deputation from the board was sent to the committee of that society in order to try and make some arrangement about regular payments. This they were able to do, as the Partick committee agreed to pay for the bread they received at the end of every week, at the same time making payments toward the reduction of the balance which they owed the Federation.

But if societies were withdrawing as they became strong enough to start bakeries of their own, other societies were coming in to take their places, while the societies in Glasgow were growing stronger and stronger. Gilbertfield and Cambuslang societies joined up early in 1885; Cessnock Society, an offshoot from Kinning Park, became a member a month or two later. South-Eastern Society and Parkhead, two societies which had been members in the early days but had withdrawn, were again admitted to membership; Renfrew Society again became purchasers; Newton Mearns and Maryhill societies became members; Westmuir Economical Society became a purchaser and, later, a member. Newton Society also joined the Federation, and Blairdardie returned to the fold after an absence of several years. Then came Hallside, and by the end of April 1888, Shettleston, making the thirty-sixth member of the Federation. All this increase in the membership was not spontaneous, however; it was the reward of much propaganda work, the writing of many letters and the paying of many visits by the members of the committee. They were building, and, later, they had built a huge bakery. It was their intention that it should be working to its full capacity at the earliest possible moment, and so they went about their propaganda in a systematic manner, dividing up the area into districts, which were placed in charge of certain members of the committee, to be worked up at every opportunity.

#### RECOGNISING LOYAL SERVICE.

During the whole of the time which it took to build the new bakery the Society was working at a disadvantage. Notwithstanding the leasing, first of Scotland Street bakery and then of that in Hill Street, it was impossible to keep pace with the



demand for bread. The result was that the committee decided to sound the foreman baker on the question of whether the men would be willing to begin work an hour earlier in the mornings. The men when approached agreed readily, and thus the difficulty was met to some extent. In recognition of this willingness on the part of the men to meet them, the board decided spontaneously to advance the men's wages by 1/ per week. One cannot help but contrast this willingness of the men to help the Society in a difficulty with incidents which have occurred at later dates, when the bakers could not be induced on any terms to work extra hours in order that difficulties might be overcome. The first attitude rather than the second one is that which makes for the avoidance of friction and the creation of a fraternal spirit between the directors of a Co-operative concern and their fellow-members who carry on the work of the Society. It is, unfortunately, a fact which is to be deprecated that employees are disposed to treat Co-operative societies worse instead of better than they treat other employers, and the process of reasoning which leads to such results is somewhat difficult to follow.

#### A STABLE INSPECTOR.

Away back in the second year of the Federation's existence Mr Ballantyne had been appointed stable inspector to the Society. The appointment had been made by the committee, but evidently the committee of the period with which we are dealing were unable to find any record of the fact, and seem to have taken exception to his work, which, according to one minute, "was independent of the board, and how or when he had been appointed could not be discovered." The difficulty was not a great one, however. It was remitted to the sub-committee for investigation and, doubtless, a consultation with Mr Ballantyne, the gentleman in question, would put them on the track of the necessary information. Mr Ballantyne, during practically the whole period of the Society's existence, had exercised supervision over the horses which were the property of the Society. He made a regular examination, and recommended the committee to dispose of horses which he considered unfitted for the work of the Society. The committee were evidently satisfied with the report which was made to them,

for at the next meeting they endorsed and confirmed Mr Ballantyne's appointment and agreed to pay 20/ a quarter for a monthly report from him on the condition of horses, vans, and all matters connected with the stable department—the appointment to be an annual one.

#### FINANCE.

The question of the proper depreciation of the property, fixed and live stock of the Society, to which attention had been called by the auditors on many occasions, had not yet been placed on a satisfactory basis. The committee brought in several amendments of rules for the purpose of putting the matter right, but these were not accepted by the delegates; nor was a counter proposal, that a sum of £200 be taken from the reserve fund and applied to reducing the value of the horses and plant. This latter proposal received a majority of the votes at the quarterly meeting, but as a majority of three-fourths of those voting was necessary before any money could be withdrawn from the reserve fund, and the majority was not large enough, both proposals dropped, and the old, unsatisfactory position continued. At a later date the question was again brought up by Mr Macintosh, who, in response to a request by the committee, outlined a scheme for putting this important branch of the Society's financial arrangements on a sound footing. The practice had been to allocate a certain percentage of the profits each quarter to depreciation account; Mr Macintosh urged that for this method they should substitute that of allocating a fixed percentage of the initial cost, and that this should be regarded as a charge on the trade of the Society and should be allocated before the profits were ascertained and irrespective of whether there were any profits. The committee were in favour of the proposed alteration, but considered the time inopportune to have it made as so large a proportion of the property was unproductive at that time. They therefore decided to delay the matter for twelve months. It was not until the end of 1888 that depreciation was put on a satisfactory basis.

#### AN INVESTMENT.

It was during this period that the Scottish Co-operative Farming Association came into being. The Bakery board were

supporters of the proposal from the first. In discussing the subject the committee took into consideration the fact that they were spending nearly £200 a quarter for feeding-stuffs and buttermilk for baking purposes, and they thought that if such an association was in existence a large proportion of these articles could be got from the farm. They agreed, therefore, to recommend to the delegates at the quarterly meeting that a special general meeting be held to consider the advisability of becoming members of the Farming Association. When this meeting was held it was agreed that £50 be invested in the funds of the association. Unfortunately, however, the speculation did not turn out a success, as, after struggling on for several years, the association had to succumb to adverse circumstances.

For some considerable time there was a certain amount of looseness in conducting the stable, and the result was that finally the committee felt compelled to make a change there by dispensing with the services of the foreman. There was trouble at Hill Street also for a time, but eventually this was overcome. For some considerable time, however, both before and after the opening of the new bakery, the complaints about the quality of the bread, which for some years had been almost negligible, revived, and sometimes the committee at the monthly meetings had letters from as many as a dozen societies. The causes of complaint were various, but seemed persistent for a time.

Once before the S.C.W.S. had thought that they had reason to complain of the share of the U.C.B.S. trade in flour which was being put past them, and after two or three years had passed the same subject came up again through a deputation from the Wholesale Society waiting on the Baking Society's Board. The whole subject was gone into minutely, and the Wholesale deputation were told plainly that while the U.C.B.S. directors had every desire to trade with the Wholesale Society they could not do so while such a discrepancy existed between the prices which the Wholesale Society charged for flours and those at which similar flours could be purchased elsewhere. The result of this first meeting was that a second meeting was arranged between representatives of the two societies, when the whole subject was investigated. Both committees, it is stated, "received from each other much valuable information which would be advantageous to both societies."



Reference has already been made to the propagandist work carried on by the directors at this time. Amongst other work of a propagandist nature, they held, in the autumn of 1887, a social meeting, to which the employees of the various societies dealing with them were invited. The object of the social gathering was twofold. In the first place, they wished to give the employees a good time ; but they had also an ulterior object in view, and so they took advantage of the opportunity given by the social meeting to bring to the notice of the employees the good which accrued to Co-operators generally by making the Co-operative movement self-contained and self-supplying, as far as that was possible. It is not possible to say whether this first attempt to secure the co-operation of the employees in pushing the wares of the Society met with much visible success, but it was one of those efforts from which something might be gained but by which nothing could be lost. Since that day the Co-operative employee has been a frequent visitor at social gatherings convened by the U.C.B.S.

In the course of the propaganda campaign carried out by the directors, some peculiar proposals were made to them. By the committee of one society the deputation were informed that the private bakers from whom bread was being bought not only supplied the shops, but delivered bread at the members' houses as well. In addition, they carried goods from the shops to the members and, in general, acted as delivery vans for the society. Nor was this all. In addition to delivering the bread to the members' houses, they went the length of absolving the society from responsibility for loss through non-payment by the members of their bread accounts. The Baking Society could not hope to compete against such practices, and the directors said so. In other instances the societies were prepared to assume responsibility for payment of the bread supplied to members if only the Baking Society's van would deliver it, and the committee were willing to entertain this proposal, but the quarterly meeting of the Baking Society decided that bread should be supplied to shops only of customer societies.

#### A RIGHT OF WAY CASE.

A paragraph of a rather peculiar character appears in the last minute for 1885. At that time the committee were in the

thick of their preparations for the new bakery, and must have been extremely busy. Nevertheless, some time during the month, a letter was received which must have worried the secretary and the sub-committee not a little. It was signed "Thomas Mann," and was as follows:—

"Gentlemen,—As aiders and abettors in the Kilbarchan Right of Way case I have to inform you that the expenses, amounting to £850, are still unpaid, and that unless an arrangement is made with my law agent within eight days an action will be raised against you in the Court of Session for the full amount."

The manager had replied wishing to know on what authority Mr Mann had taken it upon himself to state that the Society were aiders and abettors in the action referred to; and in reply was referred to a paragraph in the Paisley newspaper of 15th July 1883, in which the Co-operative Baking Society, Kinning Park, was published as one of the abettors. Mr Mann had no doubt that the statement was correct, and warned the Society that it was necessary to attend to his former letter at once to save future trouble. The Bakery board replied to threat by threat. If any further communication was received from Mr Mann, the matter was to be put into the hands of the Society's law agent, who was to raise an action against him for trying to extort money on false pretences, as the Society had never paid any money to assist in the "Right of Way" case. Nothing more seems to have been heard of the subject, for nothing further appears in the minutes regarding it.

In August 1887 the building committee, having completed their labours, were thanked for their services, and dissolved. The buildings, plant, and stocks in the new bakery were insured for £16,000, while the buildings and plant in St James Street were insured for £2,000. About this time the directors were called on to consider some grievances under which the employees, and particularly the vanmen, alleged that they suffered. The first of those had reference to attendance at the stables on Sundays. The committee made investigations, and came to the conclusion that no grievance was suffered. Attendance on Sundays to look after the comfort of the horses was not work, they decided, but an act of mercy, which was not paid for anywhere. The other grievance—that the vanmen by the nature of their work did not get regular holidays "and had no opportunity of going to the coast with their families"—the

directors thought well founded, and they decided to allow three consecutive days to each man in future, in addition to the holidays they at present received ; stipulating, however, that no two men were to be on holiday at the same time.

#### A NEW VENTURE.

In September, after the new bakery was opened, the Society began the baking of morning rolls, a branch of trade which immediately became popular with the members of the societies. For this trade two light vans and two fast horses were purchased, and the result was that not only was a large trade in breakfast rolls done, but the bread trade increased rapidly also. The baking of rolls had, as a matter of fact, cut the last link which chained some of the societies to the private baker. The bakers did not surrender the trade of the societies without a struggle, however. Finding that they were ousted from the roll trade, they turned their attention to buns as a means of recapturing the lost trade, and for a time they were successful with a number of the societies. But the Bakery directors were alive to the danger, and ere long they also were baking buns at M'Neil Street.

#### THE CHAIRMAN RETIRES.

Having seen the new premises in full operation, Mr Fraser came to the conclusion that the time had come when he should resign his position as president of the Society. During his seven years of office he had seen the trade doubled ; he had seen the handsome new bakery erected and opened ; and he had seen the Society established in an unassailable position. While a member of the committee, during the presidency of Mr Brown, and while he had been president, he had been a hard worker for the success of the Society, and well deserved the words of eulogy in which Mr Slater conveyed the thanks of the committee to him at the last meeting of the board before his retiral. He was succeeded by Mr John Ferguson, Glasgow Eastern Society.

Inside a month or two, he was followed into retirement by Mr Thomas Slater, secretary. Mr Slater had been elected secretary in 1875 when Mr Smith became manager, and had discharged the duties of his office faithfully and well. At the time of his retiral, and indeed for many years before then, he



had the longest record of service on the board of the Society. Mr Peter Glasse, St George, succeeded him.

#### INCREASES ALL ROUND.

At the end of 1887 the Society was doing a trade of over 410 sacks per week, and in the first month of the new year 600 new shares were granted to societies. By the end of the 77th quarter the trade had risen to 446 sacks per week, and a dividend of  $\frac{1}{3}$  was paid. The increases which were taking place in the numbers of shares held by the societies pointed to increases in membership, and therefore to opportunities for increased trade by the Federation. The directors were fully alive to this phase of the subject, and although they were still a considerable distance from producing the full capacity of the bakery, it was becoming evident that if the present rate of increase continued that limit would soon be reached. At the same time they could be pardoned if they felt that the delegates were not as appreciative of the work which was being done as they might have been. This lack of appreciation was shown in a remarkable and unprecedented manner at the 76th quarterly meeting of the Society when, by a majority of two votes, it was decided to reduce the payments made to them for their services from 3/ to 2/ per meeting. Lack of appreciation could hardly have gone further short of asking them to resign in a body. It was a very shabby return for the years of strenuous work which had made the Baking Society that outstanding instance of Co-operative enterprise which it had become. The directors went on with their work calmly, however, content to merit, even if they did not receive, the appreciation to which their efforts for the success of the Federation entitled them.

## CHAPTER IX.

### M'NEIL STREET: RAPID DEVELOPMENTS.

A BISCUIT FACTORY—FURTHER EXTENSIONS—THE U.C.B.S. AND THE S.C.W.S.—AN ACCIDENT—RESIGNATION OF FOREMAN BAKER—CO-OPERATIVE FAILURES—THE MANAGER RESIGNS—FIRST GLASGOW BOYCOTT—A NEW PRESIDENT—MAJORITY CELEBRATIONS—THE DINNER—STILL MORE EXTENSIONS—THE INFLUENCE OF CONGRESS—EXTENSIONS AGAIN—ST JAMES STREET PREMISES SOLD—NEW BUILDING COLLAPSES—MORE BUILDING—BUILDING DEPARTMENT STARTED.

THE Baking Society had now entered on a period of extraordinary development. Department was added to department and extension followed extension with marvellous rapidity. It seemed, indeed, as if the spirit of Co-operation had only been waiting for a suitable habitation in order to show the great things of which it was capable. In the six years—1888-1894—the output of the Society rose from 466 sacks per week to 1,254, and the number of departments in the bakery from two to seven, while tearooms had been opened, a purveying department was being carried on, and a workshops and trades department was in operation. The sales for the 77th quarter were £12,438; by the end of the year they were £16,490, and by the 88th, which, however, was a fourteen week quarter, they were £27,210. The trade had more than doubled in three years. In the same period the membership, which had been thirty-six societies at the end of the 77th quarter, had grown to forty-six at the end of the 88th.

Before the Society had been six months installed in M'Neil Street the committee were beginning to have visions of congestion such as they had experienced in St James Street, unless they took time by the forelock and made arrangements which would enable them to grapple with their ever-increasing trade before it again overwhelmed them. The first business they decided to tackle was that of erecting a biscuit factory, where they could produce fancy biscuits of all kinds. Hitherto they had been getting such biscuits as they were able to sell from a

firm of manufacturers in the city, and were having them invoiced through the S.C.W.S. Investigation showed that this mode of procedure was one which was not profitable to the Society, but, at the time when the investigation was made, the directors were not in a position to do anything; and when they secured the ground on which to build their new factory the congestion in their bread department made instant provision for that department the premier necessity. But now that they had the bread difficulty settled for a short time they turned their attention to the question of biscuits. Provision had been made in the new building for a travelling oven, but its installation had been held over while the more important work was being carried out. Early in 1888, however, it was decided to purchase a biscuit-cutting machine, and one similar to the working model which was being shown in Glasgow Exhibition was ordered, at a cost of £258. They did not act without caution, however, for before the machine was purchased they wrote to the manager of Crumpsall bakery for his opinion of the biscuit machines made by the firm from which they proposed to purchase. With the object of ensuring that everything possible would be done to promote the sale of the biscuits when they were made, the committee also approached the directors of the Wholesale Society as to the likelihood of that federation becoming agent for the U.C.B.S. in the biscuit trade. They were informed that the Wholesale Society viewed the proposal favourably, and were likely to adopt it when the occasion arose. The societies were all circularised with the view of ascertaining what was the aggregate trade in biscuits which might be expected.

#### FURTHER EXTENSIONS.

Hitherto the committee had only the erection of a biscuit factory in mind, and plans for that building had been prepared, and in January of 1889 were considered by them. By February, however, they came to the decision that a biscuit factory was not enough. The trade now exceeded 600 sacks per week, an increase of 200 sacks inside the year, and they were of opinion that further extensions were necessary to meet the growing demand for bread. They therefore asked the quarterly meeting for permission to spend between £3,000 and £4,000 on the erection of a new wing to the bakery. This power was granted readily.



They were now ready to proceed, but they had learned something from their experience while the first portion of M'Neil Street premises was being erected, so they decided to consult with the architect as to whether it would be advisable to put the whole of the work in connection with the erection of the building into the hands of one contractor, so as to get a time limit inserted in the contract. The architect, however, was not in favour of placing all the work in the hands of one contractor. The firm of masons who had built the earlier section were again successful in obtaining the contract for the building work. The contracts for the whole of the building work were fixed for a total sum of £5,532. A few weeks later a contract was fixed up for the erection of a travelling biscuit oven, at a cost of £200.

The new building when completed added very considerably to the Society's productive power. It contained on the first flat the pastry bakehouse with four ovens; on the second flat the fancy biscuit department with one travelling oven and four ordinary ovens; the third flat was devoted to the operations of the biscuit and pastry packing workers; while on the fourth flat was the new oatcake bakery. The whole of the new wing was finished and ready to start operations at the beginning of April 1890, and not before it was required, for the average output had grown by then to 715 sacks per week, fifteen sacks more than the first building in M'Neil Street had been erected to produce.

#### THE U.C.B.S. AND THE S.C.W.S.

At the end of 1888 the Wholesale Society had become members of the Baking Society, and had taken out 240 shares. This was done, doubtless, in view of the fact that the Wholesale Society had consented to act as agents for the Baking Society's biscuits. On the other hand, the trade which was being done in flour with the Wholesale Society was far from satisfactory, and at a meeting of the Baking Society's committee, which took place in February of 1889, attention was called by the sub-committee to the fact that, of over 2,000 sacks of flour which had been purchased during the month, only 300 sacks had been bought from the Wholesale Society. It was agreed to call the attention of the Wholesale directors to this fact, and to state that the trade was going past them because their price was higher than the same flour was being purchased at elsewhere. As a

result of this letter, the Wholesale Society appointed a deputation to meet with a deputation of the directors of the Baking Society for the purpose of considering the trading relations between the two societies. Exactly what the result of the meeting was, however, is not shown in the minutes ; all that these contain being the statement that Mr M'Culloch gave a very full report of what had taken place. From the frequency with which this subject had been cropping up in recent years, however, it was evident that there was something wrong somewhere. At this late date it is not possible to do more than guess at the reasons why the Wholesale Society was not in a position to compete, but it was probably owing to the fact that the Baking Society was now so large a purchaser of flour that it was able to buy from the millers on as good terms as the Wholesale Society itself could do.

#### AN ACCIDENT.

Notwithstanding the large number of vehicles which the Society had on the road, it had been wonderfully free from accidents of a serious nature. Hitherto the killing of the Tramway Company's horse had been the most serious, and the results of that accident had been serious, not so much because of the accident itself, as because of the litigation which followed. Early in 1889, however, an accident occurred on the Albert Bridge, which although, fortunately, not so serious as it might have been, yet served to impress on the vanmen in the service of the Society the necessity for caution when driving through the streets of the city. Two men were run down on the bridge by one of the Society's vans and injured, and the vanman was arrested and fined. The Society agreed to pay the fine, and also settled with the injured men for £10, but the vanman was dismissed from the service of the Society.

About this time a petition was again received from the vanmen with reference to holidays and Sunday labour. The men wished the three days' holidays which they were allowed increased to six days, while they also wished payment for attending to the horses on Sundays. The committee could not see their way to make any further concession of holidays, but they agreed that men who had to spend a full day in the stable on Sundays should receive a day's pay. This was probably the first occasion in Glasgow on which it was recognised that wages

paid to vanmen and carters were for a six-day week, and that work on the seventh day should be paid for. In this matter as in so many others the Baking Society were pioneers, and it was not until more than twenty years had passed that the trade union was able to enforce all over the city the rule that Sunday work in the stables should be paid for.

#### RESIGNATION OF FOREMAN BAKER.

At the end of the 79th quarter Mr Lang, who had been foreman baker with the Society during all the time they had been in St James Street, resigned his situation, and a Mr Marshall was appointed. Mr Marshall came to the Society with excellent testimonials, but, somehow or other, after his appointment the number of complaints with regard to the quality of the bread increased steadily, and at times came in from a dozen societies at once. He was interviewed repeatedly by the committee and the necessity of maintaining a high standard in bread was impressed on him, but little improvement took place. At length it was discovered by the sub-committee that he was absent from work without leave, and he was suspended by them, and at the next meeting of the full committee was dismissed, and Mr Robert Fraser was appointed. From Mr Fraser's appointment complaints became much less frequent.

There were districts where Co-operation was not yet firmly established, and through the policy of the directors, which made for helping societies wherever possible, small sums were still being lost occasionally. The next society to close its doors was Clippens. For some time it had been in low water, and as the Federation was finding it impossible to obtain payment the supply of bread was stopped. The committee of the Renfrewshire Co-operative Conference Association undertook, however, to try and get that association to become security for payment, and supplies were again granted, but only for a short time as, when the matter came before the Conference, the delegates refused to accept any responsibility. It was then arranged that payment should be made for the bread on delivery, and that payments should be made periodically for the purpose of reducing the debt of the society. In a very short time this arrangement also was departed from, and the society shortly afterwards collapsed, the assets only paying 1/2 per £ of the



debts owing. There were other societies which were not paying their accounts regularly, and on several occasions these were written to and requested to make prompt payments. About this time, also, Cessnock Society went into liquidation, but were able to pay about twenty shillings in the pound.

#### RESIGNATION OF MANAGER.

Mr David Smith had been manager of the Society from the time when Mr Robert Craig resigned, in the summer of 1875 ; while prior to that time he had acted as secretary, and he had been a member of the committee from the first year of the Society's existence, having been the representative of St Rollox Society. He had thus an unbroken acquaintance with the work of the Society as member of committee, secretary, and manager for almost twenty years ; but the time had now arrived when he decided to sever his connection, and so, in October 1889, he intimated to the committee that he was resigning in order to commence business for himself. His resignation was accepted, and at the same meeting a special sub-committee was appointed to make inquiries from the heads of the various departments with the object of ascertaining whether it was possible to carry on the business without a general manager. The result of this inquiry was that the committee decided to rearrange the methods of business by giving each departmental manager full control of his department under the committee, thus obviating the necessity of appointing a general manager in the meantime. Instead of a general manager it was decided to appoint a cashier and accountant who should have full control of the office, and Mr James H. Forsyth, from the accountancy department of the Wholesale Society, was appointed.

#### THE FIRST GLASGOW BOYCOTT.

It was in the later years of the 'Eighties that the first Glasgow boycott took place, and it struggled on spasmodically for several years. It had very little evil effect on the progress of the Co-operative movement, but here and there it served to teach the members and directors of societies a much-needed lesson as to the value of Co-operative federal institutions. Particularly was this the case with one society mentioned in

the last chapter as receiving exceptional conditions from private bakers. As a result of the boycott two out of the three baking firms which had been supplying the society with bread refused to do so any longer, with the result that the directors had to appeal to the Federation to come to their rescue. This the directors of the Federation were quite ready to do, and so the society joined the Federation and had bread delivered to its members at a cost of  $1/3$  per hour, instead of getting it delivered free and being relieved from responsibility for bad debts, which were the terms given by the firms which had failed it when the strain came. Another society which was suffering through the application of the boycott by the bakers who supplied it was High Blantyre, which also appealed for assistance, and shortly afterwards became a member of the Federation. The membership of the city societies was also growing very rapidly, and this growth was being reflected in the sales of the Federation, which showed a progressive increase every quarter. At the beginning of the 78th quarter the number of societies affiliated was thirty-six; when the coming-of-age celebrations took place two years later the membership had increased to forty-two societies notwithstanding that Clippens and Cessnock societies had ceased to exist.

#### A NEW PRESIDENT.

Another important change which took place at the end of 1889 was the retiral from the presidency of Mr John Ferguson and the appointment of Mr Duncan M'Culloch in his place. This change marked the beginning of a period of unexampled expansion in the growth of the Society. Just about this time, also, the Federation was asked to supply Dumbarton Society with bread while that society's own bakery was being rebuilt. The Federation at the end of this year was making a big bid for the trade of the societies in cakes and buns for the New Year trade. They had embarked on this trade on a small scale some time earlier, but the business done for the season 1889-1890 was important enough to find a place in the minutes as being 25 per cent. greater than that of the previous year.

#### MAJORITY CELEBRATIONS.

Early in February 1890, when the new buildings were approaching completion, it was decided that the opening of

these for trade should also be taken advantage of to celebrate the coming of age of the Society, and somewhat elaborate provision was made to have a function which would advertise the business of the Society. It was agreed that five tickets should be sent to every society doing a trade of £250, ten tickets to those societies whose trade was between £250 and £500, and fifteen tickets to societies whose trade was over £500. At a later meeting it was agreed that one bottle of beer be supplied to each guest attending the celebration.

The celebration of the majority of the Society, combined as it was with the opening of the new wing of the bakery premises, was a notable demonstration of the progress of Co-operation. The opening ceremony was on a grand scale, as in addition to the large number of delegates who had been invited there were also present a number of visitors, including some from England. Mr M'Culloch presided, and the opening ceremony was performed by Mr Glasse, secretary of the Society, declaring the premises open in a brilliant speech in which he traced the history of the Federation from its earliest days, and commented on the wonderful progress it had made. The occasion, he said, was one of which the Co-operators of the West of Scotland should be proud. They were met in buildings which were magnificent, and which were a fine example of what might be done by working men. He reminded his audience that only three years had elapsed since they had met at the same place to open the original buildings. At that time the committee did not think that an extension would be required so soon; the only difficulty they had anticipated being that of finding sufficient trade to keep the bakery fully occupied. That difficulty was soon overcome, however, and the trade had increased so rapidly that they were forced to proceed with the buildings they were met to open that day. How necessary the new buildings were he illustrated by pointing out that while M'Neil Street original bakery had been erected to do a trade of 700 sacks per week, the quarter which would end on the 27th April would show, he anticipated, an average output of 715 sacks per week. When they had started in St James Street it took fourteen years to work up to their full capacity of 400 sacks per week, but now they had increased their trade by over 300 sacks a week in rather less than three years. He hoped that



the biscuit factory which they were opening that day would prove as great a success as the bread baking factory had done, and that many societies outside the Federation's radius for bread would avail themselves of its products. The United Co-operative Baking Society was one of the grandest examples of Co-operation which they had in the country, and it was fast becoming one of the largest producers of bread in the West of Scotland. He referred to the conditions under which the baking trade was carried on in the small bakeries, quoting the *Lancet* as having stated that many of the workmen had to work under conditions that were abominable, and he invited those present to walk through the bakery and see that everything there was clean and sweet. He pointed out that, of the 140 bakeries in Glasgow, three did as much trade as the whole of the remainder. It was gratifying, he continued, that during the whole twenty-one years of its existence the Baking Society had not had a single dispute with its employees. They had always paid the best wages and employed the best hands. Besides the usual discount, also, the Society had paid £34,170 as dividend on purchases, and that fact in itself spoke for the value of the Federation.

Mr Glasse then, by pulling a lever, set the machinery in motion and declared the premises open.

#### THE DINNER.

Mr McCulloch presided also at the dinner, at which more than 400 guests were present, including Mr Ben Jones. In his address of welcome the chairman asked the delegates to project their minds into the future and ask themselves what would be the magnitude of that branch of the Society's business which they were starting that day when they met to celebrate the coming of age of the biscuit factory twenty-one years hence. He also referred to the fact that all the presidents of the Society but one were present with them.

Speeches were delivered by Messrs J. Lochhead, Ben Jones, William Revie, Gabriel Thomson, Donald Cameron (two ex-presidents), Mr Glasse, Mr J. Ferguson, Mr J. M'Murran, Mr William Barclay (another ex-president), and Mr Malcolm Neil. Mr Jones described London, from which he had come, as "a Co-operative desert," while, in proposing "Retail Co-operation," Mr Glasse said that in the Second City of the

Empire retail Co-operators were nearly as bad as they were in the first, although during the past five years some headway had been made in the city.

#### STILL MORE EXTENSIONS.

The year 1890 was the year in which the Co-operative Congress was last held in Glasgow. There had been an earlier Congress held in the city—in 1876—but it passed without much note being taken of it, and seemingly without having had much influence save on those who were in close touch with it. It was different with the Congress of 1890, however. It gave an impetus to Co-operation in the city which was felt by every society, and the effects of which have not died out even yet. It was like that first strong push which overcomes the inertia of a snowball at the top of a steep slope, and sends it rolling down hill, ever increasing in speed and in size as it rolls on. To some extent the ground had been prepared for the Congress by the Wholesale Society in its erection of the buildings at Shieldhall; an evidence of the life of Co-operation in the city which could not fail to appeal to the imaginations of a commercial people like the Glaswegians; and by the opening of the new bakery at M'Neil Street, and the big Co-operative demonstration which accompanied that opening. Shieldhall and M'Neil Street might be likened to the gentle rain which watered the feeble plant of Co-operation in the city, and the 1890 Congress to the sun, the warmth of whose rays caused it to blossom and grow strong.

Co-operation made itself manifest in various ways during Congress week. The Bakery was thronged with visitors; flags floated gaily from the tops of the buildings, and a grand Co-operative procession took place through the city, during which the lifeboat "Co-operator" was launched on the Clyde. The directors of the Baking Society were not slow to take advantage of all this enthusiasm for Co-operation. They took a stall at the Congress Exhibition of Co-operative productions, and attracted much attention by the high quality of the goods shown. The result was that the trade of the new biscuit department received a send off it might not otherwise have secured. Many orders were booked during the Exhibition week, and others came flowing in for weeks afterwards.

At the 85th quarterly meeting, held just at the close of Congress, the chairman made the new biscuit factory the text of his opening remarks to the delegates, pointing out the facilities which the Society now enjoyed for carrying on this trade, and impressing on them the desirability of fostering it in the societies by every means in their power. The result was that the trade developed at a rapid rate. At first the committee had been in doubt as to whether sufficient trade could be secured to keep the one travelling oven which they had erected fully employed, but almost from the start these doubts were resolved. Another source of gratification was to be found in the fact that the societies were well pleased with the quality of the biscuits which were being made, and that a fair return was being secured on the trade done. Arrangements had been made with the Wholesale Society at the beginning of the new department, whereby that society became agents for biscuits, but some misunderstanding seems to have arisen, for towards the end of the year the society wrote to the Baking Society's committee, complaining that the terms of the agreement between the two societies with regard to the biscuit agency were not being adhered to. This led to meetings between the two boards, as a result of which all the difficulties were removed, and an immediate increase in the trade in biscuits amongst the societies in Scotland followed.

#### STILL FURTHER EXTENSIONS.

The bread trade of the Society also continued to increase at an extraordinary rate. So much so that, by the beginning of 1891, nine months after the opening of the last addition to the bakery, the trade was within fourteen sacks of the full output capacity of 1,000 sacks per week. The directors saw that some steps must be taken at once to increase baking capacity, and applied to the quarterly meeting for power to take over or to sell St James Street property, and at the same time for power to acquire land for the purpose of extending the bakery. Power in both directions was granted, although a director of the Wholesale Society, acting, he stated, on the authority of his board, moved that power be not granted. Evidently, however, this gentleman had misunderstood the attitude of the Wholesale Society's directors, for subsequently a letter was received from the secretary of that federation, in which it was stated that they



had given no instructions to oppose the extension of the Baking Society's premises, and that, in fact, they were in favour of this course being taken.

St James Street premises were offered for sale at £3,960, and again at £3,600, but there were no offerers. Ultimately, however, they were disposed of for £3,100.

The intention of the committee was to purchase the block of ground adjoining the bakery at the corner of Govan Street and South York Street, but as they considered that the price which was being asked was too great, it was decided to proceed with the erection of an addition at the north end of the present property in M'Neil Street. The plans of the extension, when completed, showed provision for twenty-seven ovens additional, which would allow a trade of 1,650 sacks per week to be done. At the same time, steps were taken to add another flat to the stables, and to remove the office to the first flat of the biscuit factory.

#### NEW BUILDING COLLAPSES.

Satisfactory progress was being made with the new building and the addition had been nearly completed when a disaster occurred which caused much of the work to be done over again. One of the tie-rods in the north portion of the building broke, with the result that the whole arch gave way, falling through the two floors beneath and carrying them with it, as well as the first and second floors in the southern section of the building. The result was that a large portion of the walls had to be taken down and rebuilt, the cost of the damage being at least £1,000, in addition to the delay occasioned. Investigations into the cause of the collapse did not result in any definite cause being discovered, although the engineers who made the investigation reported several points which, in combination, were likely to have been responsible. This collapse had occurred in August, but so expeditious were the builders that by the beginning of December the Society was getting the use of five ovens, and by the beginning of March 1893 the whole of the addition was ready for occupancy.

#### MORE BUILDING.

At the same time another addition, which included duplicating the stable accommodation and carrying both sections a storey higher, was being carried out. By this time

also, new ground had been secured in South York Street, and it was decided to utilise the buildings there for a new biscuit factory, in which one double travelling oven and six hand ovens would be built. It was also agreed to put in a hoist into the building, so as to enable it to be used for packing and storage purposes.

It is worthy of note, in connection with the alteration of the old building to make it suitable for a biscuit factory, that it was decided to have the work done by means of labour employed directly by the Society. This decision marks the inception of the building department of the Society, a department which has since then carried out some of the most important work done by the Society. The block of land, which had been the most recent purchase, and which cost £8,500, made the Society the owner of the whole of the M'Neil Street-South York Street block, and gave space for expansion which has only been completely utilised in comparatively recent years.

The most recent addition to the Society's premises was not completed any too soon. The membership by this time consisted of 51 societies, although several of these, including the Paisley and Johnstone societies, were customers for biscuits only. The trade being done amounted to over 1,200 sacks per week, or 15,700 a quarter, while about 450 sacks were being turned into biscuits in the quarter, and over 360 sacks of oatmeal into oatcakes. The progress which was being made in those two departments was remarkably rapid, and must have been most encouraging to the directors, and the general progress made showed that only a very short time was likely to elapse ere still another extension would be called for.

## CHAPTER X.

### FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.

**BONUS INVESTMENT SOCIETY FORMED—AN INSURANCE FUND—ADVERTISING THE SOCIETY'S PRODUCTS—PURVEY DEPARTMENT AND TEAROOMS—FEEDING THE HUNGRY—A WORK'S FIRE BRIGADE—CONTINUOUS GROWTH—DELIVERY DIFFICULTIES—ELECTION OF MR JAMES BAIN.**

IT is to the late Mr Peter Glasse that the honour of suggesting the formation of the U.C.B.S. Bonus Investment Society belongs. Probably the idea would have occurred to someone else sooner or later, but Mr Glasse is entitled to the honour which is given to all pioneers. It was at the meetings of the sub-committee, held during December 1887, that Mr Glasse first brought up the subject, and at the committee meeting which was held on 17th December of that year the question of doing something to induce the employees to capitalise their "bonus" in the Society, instead of withdrawing it each quarter, was considered. It was left at that time in the hands of the committee to consult with the employees on the subject, but for some time the sub-committee were too busily employed on other matters connected with the Society to do anything, and it was not until nearly four years had elapsed that anything practical was done. The question was again raised by Mr Glasse, who moved a resolution, which was unanimously agreed to by the committee, expressing the opinion that the large sums of money which had been paid by the Society in the form of "bonus" had not been the means of helping forward the true principles of Co-operative "profit sharing," and agreeing that a committee of three be appointed from the board to meet with the employees, with the object of arranging a more satisfactory system. Messrs M'Culloch, Glasse, and M'Intosh were appointed to carry the proposal through.

This decision was arrived at in February 1891, and in April of that year a conference of the directors and the employees



took place, presided over by Mr M'Culloch, at which the chairman put before the employees the desire of the board that the workers should take a greater interest than hitherto in the business of the Society. He pointed out that it was with this object that the payment of bonus had been started. Since the commencement of the bonus payments large sums had been paid to the employees, but many Co-operators believed that this was only the first step in profit sharing. He suggested that a full and free discussion take place, promising that if the employees agreed to form a society with the object of becoming shareholders in the Federation, the board would do all in their power to have the rules altered so that this could be done. After the proposal had been fully discussed, it was agreed to by a large majority of those present, 61 voting for a motion that the employees leave not less than one-fourth of the bonus received for investment in the shares of the Society, and 17 for an amendment that they do not agree to leave any of the bonus. A sub-committee, consisting of Messrs M'Culloch, Glasse, and M'Intosh from the board, and of Messrs Clubb, M'Allister, and Miller from the employees, was appointed to prepare a scheme for submission to the members at a general meeting.

#### THE SCHEME APPROVED.

The scheme was brought before the members at the quarterly meeting of the Society held in September of the same year. It provided for the formation of a Bonus Investment Society confined to the employees of the U.C.B.S. Ltd., the object of which was that of enabling the employees to become members and invest their bonus in shares of the U.C.B.S. The shares were to be paid up by the retention of not less than one-fourth of the bonus payable to employees whose wages were over £1 per week. Any employee leaving the service of the Society ceased to be a member of the Bonus Investment Society, and was compelled to place his shares on the transfer list, and all transfers were to be made through the board of management. The Bonus Investment Society was to have one vote at the general meetings of the U.C.B.S. as a member, with an additional vote for every £80 of shares held in the Society. When the scheme came before the general meeting it was approved by a large majority of the delegates, only one amendment being made,

which made withdrawal from the Bonus Investment Society optional instead of compulsory on leaving the service of the Society. At the ninety-first quarterly meeting the rules were altered to permit of the new society being admitted a member and exercising the right of voting agreed on in the scheme.

Since that time the rules of the Bonus Investment Society and the conditions on which membership in the Federation is held have been altered on several occasions. First, the sum which must be held in the Federation to qualify for one vote was raised to £250, and again to £500 ; while, on a later occasion, it was also decided that the maximum number of votes which the society could exercise was twenty-five. On several occasions, also, determined attempts were made to have the payment of bonus discontinued, but always without success. In the first year in which the society was instituted the number of members was 135, and the amount paid in was £336. At the end of the twenty-seventh year the membership was 797, and the total holding in the Society £24,265. During these twenty-seven years the holding of the members in the Federation has shown a steady growth, and many employees have little nest eggs laid past for the ever-dreaded rainy day which they would not have had but for the institution of the Bonus Investment Society.

#### INSURANCE FUND STARTED.

A proposal which gave rise to a considerable amount of discussion at the quarterly meeting, held in the beginning of December 1890, was that of the committee to form an insurance fund of their own. At the meeting of the committee immediately prior to that quarterly meeting, the members of the board agreed to recommend that £500 from the profits of that quarter be taken to start an insurance fund, and that a special meeting be held at the close of the quarterly meeting to consider the question of taking £1,000 from the reserve fund and placing it to the insurance fund. At the quarterly meeting the proposal was hotly debated. Approval of the proposal of the committee to allocate £500 to the insurance fund was moved, and was met by an amendment that the proposal be deleted from the minutes. This amendment became the finding of the meeting, receiving 104 votes against 87 votes for approval of the proposal. The subject cropped up again in the balance-sheet, where, in the

## PRESENT BOARD



1. ALEXANDER BUCHANAN, President.

2. THOMAS M'LEAN.

4. MATTHEW H. CADIZ.

3. JOHN YOUNG.

5. JAMES HAMILTON.



## PRESENT BOARD



1. JOHN B. MONTEITH.

2. ROBERT M'LAY.

4. JOHN SIMPSON.

3. JOHN F. JOHNSTONE.

5. JOHN B. WALKER.

“allocation of profit account,” the £500 was shown as being devoted to an insurance fund, and a further crop of motions and amendments was the result. It was moved that the £500 be added to the reserve fund; that the balance-sheet, as printed, be adopted; and that the £500 be carried forward to next quarter. The vote resulted in two favouring the transfer of the £500 to the reserve fund, while 113 favoured the adoption of the balance-sheet as printed, and 98 the carrying forward of the sum. This vote was a clear reversal of the previous one, and showed that the delegates had no very clear conception of the business on which they were voting or else that some of them had changed their opinions with almost lightning-like rapidity. One might be pardoned for believing that it should not be possible for a business meeting to come to two diametrically opposed decisions on the one subject at the same meeting. However, the result was that the committee got their insurance scheme through, and when the special meeting was called upon to transfer £1,000 from the reserve fund to the insurance fund this was done by 145 votes to 34; and the 34 were not cast against the proposal to have an insurance fund, but in favour of a proposal that the fund should be built up from the profits of the Society quarter by quarter. At the same meeting the payment to the members of the committee was again raised to 3/ a meeting, after having remained at 2/ for three and a half years.

#### ADVERTISING THE SOCIETY'S PRODUCTS.

Mention has already been made of the success with which the Society met in their exhibition of the bakery productions at the Congress Exhibition. This success seems to have encouraged the directors to further efforts in this direction, and so we find the first mention made, in the minute of November 1890, of the institution of what has since been, until the war brought it to an end for the time being, the most popular function of the Scottish Co-operative year—the Bakery annual cake show. The results of the first show were most gratifying. Encouraged still further by this success the committee decided shortly afterwards to have a stall in the Glasgow East-End Exhibition. At this stall bakery products were sold as well as exhibited, with the result that in the ten weeks the sum of £179 was received for the sale of pastries, etc., and the committee

were so pleased with this result that they gave the young lady who had been in charge of the stall £2 as an evidence of their satisfaction with her work.

Almost from the start the Society had been affiliated with the Glasgow and Suburbs and Renfrewshire conference associations, but now they decided to affiliate also with the Central Conference Association, and shortly afterwards with the East of Scotland Association. This extension of their affiliations showed that societies situated at a distance from Glasgow were now taking an interest in the work of the Federation, and were becoming purchasers of their productions. About the middle of this year the bakers made a request for a reduction of their working day from  $9\frac{1}{2}$  hours to  $8\frac{1}{2}$  hours, thus making the working week one of fifty hours. It was also decided to alter the rate of interest payable on loans to 4 per cent. for money at call and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on money deposited at twelve months' notice of withdrawal.

It was towards the end of 1891 that the Society inaugurated that hospitality to other organisations for which it has since become so justly famous. The half-yearly meeting of the Scottish Convention of Co-operative Societies took place in Glasgow in September, and it was decided that the delegates should be shown over the bakery premises and afterwards entertained. Later in the same year an invitation was extended to the ladies of the Co-operative movement and the members of the women's guild to visit the bakery and be entertained to tea. The meeting was a great success, over 400 ladies attending. About the same time photographs of the buildings and plant were taken, and lantern slides were prepared for exhibition purposes, a set being presented to the Central Board of the Union, while a set was retained. Two thousand show cards for distribution amongst the societies were also purchased, and it was decided to exhibit the Society's biscuits again at the Congress Exhibition.

In order that the biscuit factory might be equipped on the most up-to-date lines possible, the chairman, secretary, and foreman baker were appointed a deputation to visit the C.W.S. biscuit factory at Crumpsall. On their return the chairman reported that much valuable information had been gained from the visit by both the foreman baker and himself.



The Society has ever been noted for its generosity to deserving causes, and it is not surprising, therefore, to find that when the delegates were called upon to choose between a donation of £200 and one of £100 to the funds of the Seaside Homes Association they decided on the larger sum. In order to interest the employees in the Bonus Investment Society, to establish which power had been granted by the delegates at the December quarterly meeting, the directors decided to have a social meeting with the employees, which took the form of a concert and assembly. At this meeting the benefits which they would derive from becoming members of the new society were eloquently portrayed by various speakers.

The oatcake trade was now becoming a feature of the Society's work, and four hot-plates were erected specially for this trade. The scone trade was also developing at a rapid rate, and sixteen hot-plates were erected for it. In order that space might be found for the extensions which were proposed, Mr Geddes, who had been using as a boat shed a shed which was the property of the Society, was induced to give it up, and it was fitted up as a temporary stable, with accommodation for eleven horses. About the same time the Society reduced the hours of their women workers by five per week.

#### A PURVEY DEPARTMENT.

There were and are large numbers of Co-operators in Glasgow who require to take at least one meal per day away from home, but until this time no attempt had been made to cater co-operatively for their wants. Co-operators, also, had many pleasant little functions—marriages, social meetings, etc.—for the creature comforts dispensed at which they had to be dependent on non-co-operative sources. For some time prior to the autumn of 1892 this fact had been receiving the attention and consideration of the directors of the Baking Society, and in August of that year the sub-committee were empowered to get all the necessary plant to enable them to do a purveying business for soirees, marriages, etc. At the September quarterly meeting the directors recommended that premises should be rented in the centre of the city suitable for first-class tea-rooms, and by a small majority this recommendation was agreed to by the meeting. The purvey department was started

immediately, a manager being engaged, and it was decided that members purchasing through that department should get full dividend. Unfortunately the committee at the beginning of their experiment were not happy in their choice of manager ; first one and then another having to be dismissed, and it was not until Mr Robert Watson was engaged that the department was set thoroughly on its feet. Early in 1893 premises were taken in Renfield Street for the purpose of opening first-class tearooms there. Even before the tearooms were opened a deputation from the West of Scotland Club and Institute was forward with a proposal to have a portion of the building set apart for their use, but after having a look over the place it was decided that the matter be left in abeyance meantime. The purvey department by this time was in full operation, and was being much praised for the style in which the work was being conducted. By June the tearooms were ready for opening, and it was decided at the quarterly meeting that twelve tickets be sent to each society so that members might visit the premises and have a cup of tea there. It was also decided that, in order to advertise the tearooms, a small map of the city, showing the railway stations and the position of the tearooms, and containing on the other side an advertisement for the tearooms, be sent out to all the societies in Scotland.

#### A NEW FORM OF BOYCOTT.

In connection with the purvey department a boycott in another form than the usual was experienced at this time. It is well within the recollection of many readers that, on the occasion of the marriage of the present King, Glasgow Corporation entertained 10,000 of the poor of the city to a dinner. The Baking Society wrote to the City Chamberlain asking for permission to quote for part of the purveying, and even called on the chamberlain, pointing out that the Society was a large ratepayer in the city as well as a large purveyor, and stating that it was considered that it had a right to be given a chance to quote. No notice, however, was taken of the application. Since that time the U.C.B.S. has been able to compel orders for purveys, and the failure even to acknowledge the letter showed a petty meanness on the part of either the committee in charge or of the officials, which was not at all in

keeping with the ostensible object of the dinner. This was, however, but one out of many illustrations of the lack of public spiritedness which has been manifested by the councillors of the Corporation of Glasgow when the claims of any section of the Co-operative movement have had to be considered. In all cases of public contracts the committees of the Council do not give Co-operation a chance if they find it possible to do otherwise, and cases are on record when contracts have been given to middlemen in preference to Co-operative societies, in which these middlemen filled their contracts with goods purchased from Co-operative sources at prices higher than those which the Co-operative Society had quoted to the Corporation in the first instance. With the object of popularising the new tearooms it was decided to institute a series of social and literary evenings there once a fortnight.

#### FEEDING THE HUNGRY.

It has always been widely known that the ears of those responsible for the conduct of the Baking Society's business are ever open to a call of distress from whatever quarter it comes. When the Society was young and struggling it granted a donation from its all-too-meagre funds to those left desolate by the Udston Colliery disaster, and on various other occasions similar action was taken. The winter of 1892-93 was one of the worst on record for the people of Glasgow and district. Work was so scarce that it was almost unprocurable, and the result was that thousands in the city were on, or over, the verge of starvation. There is no more hopeless position in which a man can find himself than that of being able and willing to work and yet having to trudge about day after day and week after week unable to find anyone willing to employ him, while those dependent on him are slowly starving. When to this lack of food and soul-destroying idleness are added the rigours of an almost Arctic winter, life becomes practically unbearable, and many hitherto honest and industrious men are driven to crime by despair. It is doubtful whether any more formidable and damning indictment can be framed against the present unco-operative system of society than is contained in the regular periodicity of these unemployment crises. A system of society which fails to provide means for the maintenance of all



the individuals who comprise it is a system of society which contains within itself and provides with sustenance the seeds of its own decay.

The distress in Glasgow and the West was very great, and at the December quarterly meeting of the Society the committee were empowered to distribute 20 dozens of bread each week in the manner they considered best calculated to alleviate distress. This distribution was carried on for twenty-six or twenty-seven weeks, the Society distributing free in that time over 500 dozens of bread. When the following winter came round it soon became apparent that conditions were not going to be any better than they had been in the one preceding, so the committee again received permission from the general meeting of delegates to distribute bread on the same lines as on the previous occasion.

The summer of 1894 is still remembered in Scotland as the year of the big coal strike. There is this peculiarity about the economic position in the Central and Western districts of Scotland that, when from any cause there is a slackness in the coal trade, that slackness soon manifests itself also in the whole commercial life of the community. The strike of 1894 had the effect of paralysing industry all over the country, and soon distress was manifest, not only in the coal mining districts, but in every industry which was dependent on coal for motive power. By the beginning of August distress was widespread, and appeals to the Baking Society for assistance in feeding the wives and children of the strikers and of others in distress through the strike resulted in a special meeting of the committee being called to deal with the matter. At that meeting it was decided that the committee revive the powers granted them earlier for the purpose of dealing with distress. In the course of carrying out this noble work the Federation distributed several thousands of dozens of loaves.

The effect of this good work on the movement, and on the Federation in particular, was doubtless not apparent at the moment, but the growth of the spirit of brotherhood which it fostered must have had its influence in strengthening the position of Co-operation generally and thus, indirectly, the position of the Federation. The Federation cast its bread upon the waters, as the result of an impulse which was purely humanitarian, and any results of a commercial nature which accrued in later

years were unsought and but a reflex result of a policy which in its impulse was entirely worthy and without ulterior motive.

#### A WORK'S FIRE BRIGADE.

Towards the end of 1892 a work's fire brigade was started ; a large supply of hose was procured, and after a short period of training uniforms were procured by the committee. The committee took a keen interest in the proposal to hold a bazaar in aid of the fund for providing a Co-operative seaside home for convalescents. When the ladies of the movement first met to consider plans for the bazaar they were the guests of the Society ; representatives of the Society attended the meetings held to make preparations for the bazaar ; the purvey department undertook the catering during the three days it lasted, and the profits accruing from the sales, amounting to over £17, were handed over to the Bazaar Committee. On several occasions requests by the vanmen for a full six days' holiday every year had been refused by the committee ; but in the beginning of 1893 the question was again considered, and it was agreed that the bakers, vanmen, and breadroom workers each get five days of continuous holiday instead of three.

During the whole of the period from the beginning of 1892 until well on in 1894 the time of the committee was much occupied with matters connected with the extensions which were going on. Although the addition at the north end of M'Neil Street was finished and occupied early in 1893, the work in connection with the new stables and the fitting up of the biscuit factory called for constant attention on the part of the committee, and every minute contains details of contracts entered into or being carried out ; while, in addition to the work which was being done by contract, the Society had bricklayers, painters, and a plumber working under their direct employment. A building department had not yet been formed, but the Society was gathering together the nucleus of this department which took shape and being at a later date.

#### CONTINUOUS GROWTH.

When the new buildings at M'Neil Street were commenced the private loan fund was again opened, but now money was coming in so rapidly with the continuous growth which was

taking place in the membership of societies that the committee recommended again that this fund should cease. How continuous and great was the increase in the share capital of the Society is shown by the fact that on one occasion the new shares issued in the months of June and July totalled 1,320; while, on other occasions, shares were applied for by single societies in batches of 600, 800, and 1,000. When the first M'Neil Street premises were opened in 1887, the Federation consisted of thirty-six societies, and was doing a trade of slightly over 400 sacks a week. At the majority celebrations in 1890 the number of society members had grown to forty-three, and the turnover was 715 sacks weekly. Now at the end of another four years the membership had grown to fifty-two, and the turnover to 1,254 sacks. Thus, when the Society had attained its semi-jubilee, it was doing a trade of £137,500 a year, and making a profit of £11,600; while the output of the twenty-fifth year was 64,308 sacks, and the average dividend for the year was 1/4½.

Undoubtedly the progress made from the opening of the new bakery had been little short of marvellous; yet, good though it was, it did not satisfy the committee, for there were still societies within easy reach of the bakery which gave a large proportion of their trade to outside bakers, and at least one was yet without the pale altogether. On the other hand, one society distant over 100 miles from the centre was getting a regular supply of bread, although this was soon to stop when the society began to bake for themselves. Difficulties of delivery still existed, and seemed to form the ground for a large number of the complaints which were made by societies. A further proportion of such complaints dealt with the prevalence of underbaked bread, which was but another phase of the delivery difficulty, as the bread was too quickly fired in order that the vans might get away on their rounds at the earliest possible moment. These difficulties it was hardly possible for the committee to overcome successfully, for the situation was dominated by the Bakers' Union, who for a time decreed a five o'clock start. After a time, however, the Society was successful in arranging for a four o'clock start, and just before the conclusion of the period with which we are dealing a three o'clock start was arranged for. This arrangement made for



the lessening of worry to the Bakery officials by allowing the bread to be well baked and yet to be ready for early delivery ; but it meant for the bakers the turning of night into day. In this connection it is worthy of note that in the last four months of 1893, after the new hours for the bakers came into operation, no complaints whatever came in from societies.

Mention has already been made of the cake trade and of the beginning of the cake shows in order to foster that trade. It was growing rapidly, and the sales for the season 1893-94 reached the grand total of  $32\frac{1}{2}$  tons, representing 14,533 cakes of 5 lbs. each in weight, and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  tons of shortbread. The tearooms and the purvey department also were flourishing, and were showing useful profits on the turnover. It is said that there is nothing new under the sun, and everyday experience goes to prove the wisdom of the Hebrew philosopher who is credited with having been the first to note the fact. At the quarterly meeting which was held in December 1893 notice was given of a motion to print synopses of the minutes and distribute them to the societies before the quarterly meetings. The motion was defeated, but it kept on making its appearance on the agenda with unfailing regularity until a few years ago it found favour with a majority of the delegates. Another motion of which notice was given at the same meeting, and which found a great deal of favour with the delegates when it came up for ratification at the 100th quarterly meeting, was a proposal made by Mr William Barclay, Kinning Park, on behalf of that society, that the shares of the Society should be raised from 10/ to 15/ each. The motion received the votes of a majority of the delegates, but as it meant an alteration of rule a two-thirds majority was necessary, and so it too was lost, as was also a proposal for raising the purchase qualification for a vote from £160 or a fractional part thereof to £320. At the quarterly meeting, however, perhaps the most notable thing done was the election of Mr James Bain, of Glasgow Eastern Society, as secretary. Mr Bain thus completed twenty-five years of service as secretary at the 200th quarterly meeting of the Society, held in March last. Mr Bain had served, however, a period as the representative of his society on the board of the Federation ere his election as secretary.

In looking over the various reports of contracts made during the time the stables and biscuit factory were in course of erection, it is interesting to note that one or two small contracts were secured by the S.C.W.S., particularly in connection with engineering work. Amongst other things which they did was the supplying of an elevator for the biscuit factory.

## CHAPTER XI.

### FURTHER EXTENSIONS.

MORE TEAROOMS—INCREASING BUSINESS—NEW BISCUIT FACTORY AT WORK—ANOTHER EXTENSION—MORE GROUND PURCHASED—NEW BAKERY OPENED—THE POSITION OF THE FEDERATION—NEW STABLES—ORGANISATION—MANAGER OR NO MANAGER?—RELATIONS WITH THE C.W.S.—THE BIG BOYCOTT—RELATIONS WITH MASTER BAKERS—SOME NOTEWORTHY ALTERATIONS—THE FARMING ASSOCIATION—ACCIDENTS—THE OATCAKE DEPARTMENT—ADVERTISING AND ENTERTAINING—DONATIONS—A WORKS DEPARTMENT—A FOUR YEARS' RECORD.

So successful were the tearooms in Renfield Street proving that, at the 101st quarterly meeting of the Society, the directors sought power to increase the number of these places of business. There was a difference of opinion amongst the delegates as to the best course to pursue. Some were not in favour of any further extension of this branch of the business, and carried their opposition so far as to move an amendment that power be not granted. Others favoured the principle, but urged the committee to "hasten slowly," and moved that power to open one only be granted. The vast majority of the delegates, however, were fired with the enthusiasm of the committee, or, at least, were prepared to trust them not to go further than was going to be for the benefit of the Society; so the powers sought, which were "to open one or two more tearooms as opportunity offered," were granted by a large majority. The result of this permission was that rooms were taken at Glasgow Cross—they will be remembered by most Co-operators. They were leased for ten years, the rental being £100 for the first two and a half years and £115 for the remainder of the period. Steps were immediately taken to have them fitted up as first-class tea and dining rooms, and it was decided that they should be lighted by electricity. The premises were opened to the public on 25th October, when there was a large gathering of representatives



from the societies in the Glasgow and Suburbs Conference area, friendly and other societies, and trade unions. Mr M'Culloch presided, and the rooms were declared open by Mr Maxwell, president, S.C.W.S. Mr Glasse, Mr Bain, Mr Chaddock, and other gentlemen also delivered addresses.

While negotiations and preparations had been proceeding for the opening of the Cross tearooms, preparations were also being made at the bakery for the opening of a dining hall and bread shop, and shortly after the function at the Cross these also were opened.

The next venture of the Federation was in Paisley Road, where, on 25th May 1895, tearooms were opened. Following on the opening of the Paisley Road premises, no alterations took place in this section of the Society's business until the end of 1897, when the committee, having failed to come to an arrangement with the factor for the Renfield Street premises, and being faced with the prospect of having to pay increased rent for the premises if they renewed their lease, decided to accept an offer of premises at 102 and 104 West Nile Street at £300 rental per annum. It was decided that the tearooms should be known as "The Union Rooms," and also that electric lighting be installed. Quite a long time was spent in fitting up the new premises so as to make them thoroughly worthy of the part which it was hoped they would play in the social life of the Co-operative community of the city and district, and it was not until the 28th of June 1898 that they were formally opened. The premises comprised a tearoom and smaller rooms and offices on the ground floor, as well as two large flats above. To celebrate the opening the board had decided that a tea should be given to the regular customers of the Renfield Street premises, and of these about 100 attended at a social gathering. A jovial evening was passed in song and sentiment, and many kind things were said of Mr Watson, manager, and the new premises.

Meantime, the Society had undertaken yet another venture in the catering line. In connection with the National Halls, Main Street, Gorbals, there had been a catering department, which was giving up business, and the business and plant were purchased by the Baking Society, a tearoom and an auxiliary purvey department being established there in the spring of 1898.

## INCREASING BUSINESS.

For many years the hands of the Bakery board were never out of the mortar tub, and by a slight inadvertence they fell foul, in the early summer of 1894, of the building regulations of the city. From the beginning of the year they had been in communication with the master of works of the city about some alterations which they wished to make on an old building situated on their land at Clydeside. It was necessary that some work should be carried out inside this building, and, in the course of alterations, a part of the outside wall was taken down, and was in process of rebuilding when the master of works came on the scene, stopped the work, and reported the Society to the Procurator Fiscal for a contravention of the by-laws. The result was that the Society was fined £1, 1s., but, as the work they had done was allowed to stand, they came out of the business not so badly.

By the middle of August 1894, the new biscuit factory had started operations, and the Society was able once more to fulfil the orders for biscuits which came pouring in. Already, however, the latest extension of the bread bakery was beginning to have its productive capacity taxed, and at the 104th quarterly meeting the directors obtained power from the quarterly meeting to proceed with a further extension of the bakery, this time at the corner of Govan Street and South York Street. First, however, they turned their attention to a further extension of the biscuit factory, where they had plans prepared for the erection of another flat, with provision for seven ovens. Already they had a biscuit traveller on the road who was doing well, and by the middle of the year arrangements were made with the Wholesale whereby they secured premises for a biscuit depot at Leith, and a van was placed on the road for the delivery of their goods in the East.

It was not until the beginning of the following year that the plans for the addition to the bakery were ready. These provided for a building with three flats of ovens, giving an additional baking capacity of fifty ovens. When the plans were agreed to by the quarterly meeting a strong recommendation was made that the work be carried out by the Society's own workmen, and this was done.

The next step in the scheme of extensions was the purchase of the ground at the south corner of South York Street and Govan Street on which the stables and St Mungo Halls now stand. This ground, which had an extent of 9,813 square yards, cost £8,839, 9s. In pursuance of the policy of the Society to carry out the construction of the addition to the bakery themselves, a foreman builder was engaged, at a salary of £4 a week, and building plant was bought at a cost of almost £500. The new addition was not completed until October 1897; its opening being made the occasion of a demonstration, at which a company of 1,600 people were present. The cost of the new building was £29,000. The building was a bakery complete in itself, having fifty ovens, a barmroom, breadroom, and storage for 3,000 sacks of flour. The whole bakery now had a baking capacity of 150 ovens, capable of turning out over 560,000 loaves per week.

#### THE OPENING CEREMONY.

The formal inauguration of the new buildings was performed by Mrs M'Culloch, wife of the president, who turned the steam on to the engine which was to drive the machinery in the department. In a short speech, Mr Bain then sketched the history of the Federation. On entering, each of the ladies present had been presented with a silver souvenir brooch bearing a representation of the building, and at the conclusion of the opening ceremony Mrs M'Culloch was presented with a gold brooch of similar design.

A huge vehicular demonstration, in which over a hundred vehicles took part, paraded the streets of the city after the opening ceremony. Many mottoes were displayed on the decorated lorries and vans, amongst the most prominent being one which stated "Our answer to the boycott—other 54 ovens added." The dinner took place in the East End Industrial Exhibition buildings, and Mr M'Culloch, president of the Society, presided.

In welcoming the visitors, he referred to the inception of the Society in a little back court in Coburg Street, with a bakery capable of doing a trade of forty sacks a week, and contrasted that small beginning with the size and strength of the Federation that day; the possessor of plant capable of dealing with 3,500 sacks each week. He laid stress on the fact that the building



had been done by the Society's own workmen, and that over £11,000 had been paid in wages to the builders.

Mr Peter Glasse said the Society had proved to the world the power of the Co-operative movement. During its twenty-eight years of existence it had disbursed £143,000 in the form of dividends to customers, and during all that time it had never had a strike of its workers, because it had always paid the highest rate of wages and worked the shortest possible number of hours.

Mr William Maxwell, in the course of a stirring address on "Co-operation," said that through the influence of the Co-operative movement the masses had learned that that inanimate thing called capital could be made into a willing and obedient servant, instead of, as formerly, a harsh taskmaster. There was a community of thought and action in the Co-operative movement which was bringing out much that was noble and sympathetic in human nature. The social gulfs which lay between the various classes in society would never be bridged over by the competitive system, because that system was the cause of these gulfs. That bridging could only be done by Co-operation. Their opponents were saying that they were lamentably deluded, but, if those opponents only knew it, they had aroused the members of the movement from that apathy and indifference in which they had hitherto lain dormant.

The point of Mr Maxwell's address, which was punctuated with applause, was that the "boycott" movement was then at its height in Glasgow and the West, and everywhere attempts were being made to intimidate Co-operators into forsaking the stores. These attempts only resulted in giving the movement a splendid advertisement. Everywhere the opponents came out into the open they were defeated, and some well-known firms, which, until then, had been reaping large profits from their trade with Co-operation, found that the boycott was a double-edged weapon, and that the measure which they meted out to Co-operative workmen could be meted out to themselves by Co-operative societies.

#### THE POSITION OF THE FEDERATION.

As showing the power and influence to which the Federation had attained by this time, we cannot do better than quote from

an article which appeared in *Copartnership* for June 1897. After describing the beginnings of the Society, the writer goes on :—

" But the day of small things is past ; the society has grown into one of the largest as well as one of the most important in the movement. The trade last year—1896—was £220,536 ; but in case that sum should not convey a definite notion of the work involved it should be remembered that the U.C.B.S. carries on the largest business of its kind in the United Kingdom. At present 340 sacks of flour are baked into 65,300 loaves every day, while 25 sacks are made into pastry and hand-made biscuits, 20 sacks into machine-made biscuits, and the oatcake department requires 13 sacks daily ; practically 400 sacks of flour and meal daily ; a great growth from the early days when it was difficult for the committee to keep with them the baker they employed, who had no faith in the society's future.

The biscuits and cakes are sold not only in Glasgow and all over Scotland, but are now finding their way into England, and winning favour. These goods, of course, go by rail, but it will readily be understood that the bulkiest part of the trade, bread for use in the co-operative households in and around Glasgow, requires a large staff and rolling stock ; and, as a matter of fact, the delivery department employs 62 carmen, dealing with 71 vehicles and 107 horses.

A great capital is needed to carry on so large a business, and the extent of the capital is shown in the following figures :—

| Capital.    | Societies. | Workers. | Outside<br>Individuals. |
|-------------|------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Shares..... | £37,907    | £2,900   | <i>Nil.</i>             |
| Loans.....  | 79,114     | 580      | £10,728                 |
|             | £117,021   | £3,480   | £10,728                 |
| Total.....  | £131,229." |          |                         |

The article goes on to state that the total number of employees was 829, 77 of these being employed in the building department, while 275 were members of the Bonus Investment Society. It concludes :—

" Some organisations are mere aggregations without either heart or mind. The parts mistakenly believe that they can evade as organisations duties that belong to them as individuals. But the problem before co-operators allows no such evasion. They have to set up, not only good businesses in sanitary buildings, but also a new industrial system, where labourers are recognised as human beings entitled to share in the results and direction of their own lives. Because the leaders of the United Baking Society have recognised this, and have not allowed prosperity to poison aspiration, all men will wish them well, and we may say with an inner meaning to the words that we hope in time great multitudes may eat their bread and be thankful."

## BELFAST ADVISORY COMMITTEE



*Top Row*—ALEXANDER PATTERSON; JOHN PALMER; DAVID T. GILCHRIST.

*Bottom Row*—JAMES MURPHY; WILLIAM J. M'GUFFIN, Chairman; ROBERT RODGER, Secretary.





1. JAMES YOUNG,  
General Manager.



2. JAS. H. FORSYTH,  
Cashier and Accountant.

## NEW STABLES.

The rate at which the trade of the Society was growing called for an almost continuous growth in live and rolling stock, and consequently for increased accommodation. Already the provision for stables and vansheds which had been made when the removal to M'Neil Street took place was much too small, and various makeshift methods had to be adopted to provide the necessary accommodation for the growing stud of horses. At the same time the committee were now getting a different idea of the possibilities of the enterprise, and were desirous, therefore, of making the bakery as compact, and with its various parts as well co-ordinated as possible. They were desirous, therefore, of removing the stables away from the bakery altogether, and it was with this object in view that the ground on the south side of Govan Street was purchased. At the quarterly meeting held in September 1896 they were granted power to proceed with the erection of stables and workshops, and this work was commenced immediately. At the same time, plans were prepared and the erection proceeded with of a temporary stable on a part of the same ground. By the end of 1898 the new stables and workshops were completed, and the December meeting of the Society was held there, so that the delegates might have an opportunity of being shown over the premises.

## ORGANISATION.

Never at any time had the directors shown carelessness in their supervision of what had now become a gigantic concern, and they were continually giving thought to means of improving the organisation of the Federation and of improving the supervision by the committee. Early in the period with which this chapter deals, they made arrangements whereby the members of the committee took it in turn to visit the bakery each week. These visits were found of value by the members of the committee, as it enabled them to acquire fuller information about the working of the Society. Each member reported the result of his visit to the sub-committee, together with any suggestion he had to make.

Towards the end of 1894 the committee appointed a biscuit traveller, Mr Archibald Petrie being the man appointed.

## MANAGER OR NO MANAGER.

The quarterly meeting had under consideration the question of the general management of the Society, the points discussed being the appointment of a general manager, or the development of the system of departmental managership. The discussion was inaugurated on a motion moved by Mr Malcolm of Newton Society, "that a general manager be appointed." The result of the discussion was the adoption of a suggestion by Mr Glasse—who said he had sat in committee with a manager and without a manager, and was of the opinion that the business could be best managed without a manager. He suggested that the matter should be remitted back to the committee for consideration and report, and the other motions and amendments which had been moved were withdrawn in favour of this suggestion.

The committee took up consideration of the question within a month, and came to the conclusion that the business of the Society could be best managed by being divided into six departments, with a departmental manager over each, who would be in direct touch with the committee. These departments were: (1) The counting-house; with Mr James H. Forsyth as head—this department to include all the commercial transactions of the Society. (2) The productive department, including the production of all bread, smallbread, biscuits, and oatcakes; to be under the charge of Mr Robert Fraser, who was also to have control of the enginemmen and oilers. (3) The distributive department, which was to include the dispatching of the bread and the packing and dispatching of the biscuits and oatcakes; to be under the management of Mr William Miller. (4) The delivery was to be under the control of Mr Milne, stable foreman, who was to have control of all the horses, vanmen, and nightwatchman. (5) The building and repairs department, including the tradesmen and their assistants; to be controlled by Mr Davidson. (6) The purvey department and tearooms, under the management of Mr Robert Watson.

The committee recommended, further, that they should meet fortnightly, but that the monthly meeting remain as at present, the bi-monthly meeting to be devoted to the interviewing of all the heads of departments, each of whom was to present a written report. Another recommendation was that the term



for which members of committee were elected should be extended, as they were of opinion that the frequent changes amongst the membership of the Board prevented members from acquiring a proper knowledge of the business, and had in this way interfered with the successful management of the Society. They believed that, if the delegates would accept this suggestion for the alteration of the rule governing elections, it would do much to consolidate the management of the business in the hands of the committee. At the following general meeting of the Society the principle of the report was accepted, and it was decided to hold a special meeting at the close of the next general meeting for the purpose of considering the alteration of rule proposed. At this special meeting the delegates, however, refused to make the alteration, and the tenure of office of members of committee remained at one year.

In 1894 the Society attained to the dignity of a registered telegraphic address, "Federation" being the name adopted. They also had the telephone installed, as well as private lines communicating with their teashops. At the end of the year they became members of Kinning Park, St George, and Glasgow Eastern societies for the purposes of trade, and later, of other societies as well. They also undertook a census of their employees for the purpose of finding out who amongst them were Co-operators and who were not. The census showed that the Society had 431 employees, of whom 236 were unmarried. Of the remainder 152, or 78 per cent., were associated with Co-operative societies, and 43, or 22 per cent., were not.

#### THE SOCIETY AND THE C.W.S.

Naturally the directors were anxious to push their biscuit trade as rapidly as they could, and having fixed up a trading agency with the S.C.W.S. and with the Co-operative Institute, London, they endeavoured to do the same with the C.W.S. This society had a biscuit factory of their own, however, and were, not unnaturally, reluctant to introduce what were really the goods of a competing concern, therefore they refused to accept the agency. The next step taken by the Society was that of appointing a traveller for the purpose of pushing biscuits and oatcakes in England. Against this step, however, a very vigorous protest was made by Mr James Young, who considered

that there should be no further pushing of the Society's goods into English societies against the wishes of the English Wholesale Society's committee. Following on this decision, it was agreed that the Society's productions should be exhibited at the Crystal Palace Exhibition. This activity in England brought a letter from the C.W.S. committee, who pointed out that the action of the Baking Society would lead to competition and overlapping. Later, that committee also passed a resolution in which they stated that they were ready and willing to supply all the societies in England with biscuits if they would only be allowed to do so, and sent a copy of the resolution to the Baking Society's committee.

#### THE BIG BOYCOTT.

Reference has already been made to the boycott of Co-operators which was inaugurated all over Scotland and continued throughout 1896 and 1897. The traders had made their organisation very complete, with the result that every manufacturing firm on which they were in a position to bring pressure was compelled to discharge all employees who remained members of Co-operative societies, or whose parents continued members, or else to suffer very considerable loss of trade. In no department of labour was it easier to bring effective pressure to bear than on the baking trade, and the result was that all the big baking firms in the city were compelled to post up notices informing their employees that they must cease to trade at Co-operative stores or leave their employment. Similar notices were posted up in every workshop and factory where the Traders' Association was in a position to apply any pressure, often against the will of the employers, who recognised that those of their workers who were Co-operators were usually the best and steadiest men, but who were compelled to choose between perpetrating a manifest injustice and seeing their businesses ruined. No tactics were too mean or despicable to be resorted to by the traders' organisation. They had their spies everywhere, and a favourite method of operations was that of watching the shops of the Co-operative societies and tracking the customers home, then ascertaining where the husbands were employed, and writing to their employers to demand their dismissal. This espionage system was very perfect in its way, and considerable hardship was caused to individual Co-operators

by it ; while the boycott had a lasting effect in another direction, for it was the direct cause of the large proportion of householders, in the places throughout Scotland where the boycott raged most fiercely, which became represented amongst the shareholders of the societies by the wives of the householders instead of by the householders themselves.

While it lasted the boycott was not without its humorous incidents. If the traders had their system of espionage, so also had the Co-operative Defence Association, and there was not a meeting of the Traders' Association held, however great the precautions which might be taken to ensure absolute secrecy, of which a practically *verbatim* report of the proceedings was not in the hands of the secretary of the Co-operative Defence Committee next morning. One of the laughable incidents concerned one such meeting, a full report of which was published by the Co-operators. This was followed by a visit from an irate traders' official, who demanded to know the source from which the report had come. It is hardly necessary to state that he went away without the information asked for, and to this day it is probable that the source of the information is known to less than half a dozen people, not one of whom had anything to do with the traders' organisation.

But if the boycott was the cause of hardship to individuals here and there, it brought grist in a very real sense to the Co-operative mill in other directions. Already, in this chapter, it has been pointed out that it was a two-edged weapon, and while Co-operative societies did not cease to trade with private manufacturers who did not adopt the boycott, they were kept well informed of those manufacturers who did. It was found that while some manufacturers had no wish to employ Co-operative labour they were keenly desirous of retaining Co-operative custom, and it came as an unpleasant surprise to some of them to find that Co-operative societies objected to the dismissal of employees because of their Co-operative connection, and that they refused to trade with manufacturers who adopted such tactics. It is said that one Glasgow firm lost Co-operative trade at this time worth £20,000 a year and never regained it.

In two directions the boycott benefited Co-operative production, therefore. It turned the attention of those at the head of the movement to the need of being as far as possible independent



of private manufacturers for supplies, and thus it did much to stimulate Co-operative manufactures and to hasten entry into new spheres of work. On the other hand, the operation of the boycott, where manufacturers refused to supply goods which were already being produced Co-operatively, increased the demand for the Co-operative manufactures; while the process of retaliation mentioned above also stimulated this demand. In both of those directions, the Baking Society was a gainer. One or two societies in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, which hitherto had always stood aloof from the Federation and had done very little trade with it, now approached it for supplies; while a rapidly-growing city society, whose members had consistently refused to give the Federation the whole of their bread trade, were now prepared to do so. Notwithstanding the fact that the capacity of the bakery was fully taxed, an endeavour was made by the committee to supply the wants of those societies who had brought home to them in this manner the value of federation in the day of adversity. A big trade in biscuits had also been done hitherto with Co-operative societies by the biscuit manufacturers of Glasgow, but the boycott put an end to that trade, and in this direction also the Bakery gained very considerably. It may be asserted with confidence, therefore, that not only did the traders' organisation fail to achieve the object they had in view—the destruction of the Co-operative movement in Scotland, and especially in Glasgow and the West—but their campaign had exactly the opposite effect, and ended by leaving the Co-operative movement stronger in membership, stronger in trade and capital, and with a membership more closely knit together than it would have been but for the agitation and the boycott.

The members of the Federation were not slow to recognise the vital nature of the issues at stake, and placed a credit of £1,000 in the hands of the directors to use as they might deem advisable for the defence of the Co-operative movement. At the Perth Congress, which was held when the boycott campaign was at its height, the delegates had decided in favour of Co-operative representation in Parliament; and later, when the Co-operative Union sent out a circular, with the object of ascertaining what support a Parliamentary campaign was likely to secure amongst the societies, the delegates to the Baking

Society's meeting, by a large majority, decided in favour of a Parliamentary campaign ; mainly owing to the eloquence of the chairman, Messrs Glasse and MacNab, Wholesale, Mr Gerrard, and Messrs Low and Stewart of Kinning Park. Undoubtedly, the boycott had its influence on the decision. The chairman was particularly strong in his remarks at the meeting, and, in referring to the debate on the subject which had taken place at Congress, suggested that if their English friends had had a taste of the boycott they would put aside any party prejudices. With the defeat of the traders, however, and the apathy of the Co-operators on the other side of the Border, the agitation died down, and, except as a subject of academic debate at Congress, nothing further was heard of it for some years.

#### RELATIONS WITH MASTER BAKERS.

In the middle of 1896, the Master Bakers' Association held a meeting to consider the price of bread. Out of 48 firms represented, 44 voted against making any reduction in price at the moment, while four were in favour of a reduction. After the meeting those four firms met and agreed to reduce the price. They got other three firms to join with them ; with the result that on the morning of 15th June an advertisement appeared in the Glasgow papers which stated that these seven bakers had reduced the price of their bread. The committee of the Baking Society met that evening, and they decided that while the price of flour did not warrant the reduction, yet, in order that the Federation might maintain its position it was their unanimous finding that the price should be reduced by one halfpenny on the four-pound loaf. At the same meeting it was agreed that, as the sale of " common " bread was very small, the Federation should cease baking it altogether, and produce only the one quality of bread in future—" fine." This decision was adhered to for six months, at the end of which period it was agreed to begin the baking of " common " bread again. At a later period this connection with the Master Bakers' Association was called in question at a quarterly meeting, and gave rise to a lengthy discussion. Mr Glasse of the Wholesale board was the chief critic, and moved that the Federation be not represented at these meetings in future. Several of the delegates, in supporting this motion, pointed out that some of the master bakers present

at these meetings of the association were men who had signed an agreement to do their best to put down Co-operation, and one delegate described the association as a syndicate, the members of which wished for big profits and cared for no one but themselves. It was pointed out by the chairman that this was not a properly-constituted association, but an informal gathering of people engaged in the same business. The Federation had been invited to send a representative, and had got some useful information there, but were not committed in any way. Finally, on being put to the vote, the motion of Mr Glasse was defeated in favour of an amendment that the committee act as they had been doing. The question was one which cropped up periodically at meetings of the Federation, but always with the same result of leaving the Federation unfettered to do the best they could in the interest of the concern they were appointed to manage.

#### SOME NOTEWORTHY ALTERATIONS.

For several years the rates of interest which had been paid for loans had been  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for money deposited on twelve months' notice of withdrawal and 4 per cent. on money at call, but the rate of interest in the money market had shown a decided downward tendency for some time, and towards the end of 1896 the directors recommended that the rates to be paid by the Federation should be reduced to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and 3 per cent., a recommendation which was adopted by the general meeting. At the same meeting a reform which certain members of the committee and certain delegates had advocated for some years—the raising of the value of the share from 10/ to 15/—was at last agreed to. This had the effect of adding 50 per cent. to the capital of the Society. At the same time the influx of new societies into the Federation and of new members into the societies continued at a rapid rate, so that from this source also the capital of the Society was being increased so rapidly that it was practically keeping pace with the big capital expenditure necessitated by the rapid growth of the Society's business.

In June 1897 Mr Robert Fraser, who had been foreman baker for a number of years, left the service of the Federation to take up another situation, and the committee took advantage of the fact to make some important rearrangements in the management of the bakery. This was done by dividing the



productive work into three sections : bread, biscuits, and pastry. Mr Murdoch Richard, who had been assistant to Mr Fraser for several years, was given full charge of the bread department ; Mr John Gilmour was made manager of the machine-made biscuit and oatcake sections ; and Mr William Seivewright was placed in charge of the pastry and hand-made biscuit section.

In September of the same year Mr Allan Gray, who had been one of the auditors of the Society for the long period of seventeen years, retired owing to pressure of other business, and was awarded the hearty thanks of the delegates for the long and faithful service he had given. Mr William H. Jack, of St George Society, was elected his successor. At the general meeting held on 4th December 1897, it was decided that the Federation join the International Co-operative Alliance. Earlier in the same year they had taken up 500 shares in the Scottish Co-operative Laundry Association Ltd., and, owing to their large purvey and tearoom department, were likely to be one of the largest customers of that concern. Indeed, so great was their laundry bill that at one time the directors gave serious consideration to the question of starting a laundry department of their own, for the girls in the packing and oatcake flats were supplied with overalls which required laundrying every week. The Federation also adopted the policy of providing the girls who served in the tearooms with dresses. In the spring of 1898 the Society became members of the *Scottish Co-operator* Federation. Owing to the large proportion of employees, particularly in the stable department, who were going off ill, a medical man was engaged to call at the factory regularly and supervise the health of the employees. This year the Society started the manufacture of plum puddings, and were making strenuous efforts to develop the pie trade. An expert piemaker was engaged, the societies were circularised, and a small van and a fast pony were purchased so as to ensure quick delivery. At the quarterly meeting held in March 1898, the chairman stated that, owing to the number of societies which were starting bakeries of their own and were withdrawing their loan capital from the Federation for this purpose, the committee had decided not to proceed further with the stores which they had proposed to erect in the new premises. The work had been stopped meantime, but it could be proceeded with at any time desired. He also asked for permission to

re-open the private loan fund again, the interest to be paid being  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. at twelve months' notice and 3 per cent. at call, and this permission was granted. He explained that they were not altogether in want of money, but desired to have a little more liquid capital than they had in hand at the moment. After one or two questions had been asked, the permission desired was granted.

#### THE FARMING ASSOCIATION.

When the Scottish Co-operative Farming Association was formed the Baking Society took a keen interest in it, and for such products as were of use to it was always a good customer. At a later date in the history of the association an overdraft of £200 was granted. Unfortunately, from causes which were fairly obvious, the Association, after some years of fair success, fell on evil days, and during the period with which this chapter deals the committee approached the Baking Society to take one of the farms rented by the Association. The board of the Baking Society viewed the idea with favour, believing that a farm would be a useful auxiliary to their distributive department, while it would be to the advantage of the movement if the Farming Association could be preserved from collapse ; and when the question was brought before the general meeting of the Society the majority of the delegates were also in favour of the scheme, and gave full power to the committee to proceed. Thus armed with full powers the members of the committee were wise enough to take expert advice before committing themselves definitely, and delegated two practical farmers to examine the farm and report. The reports presented by these gentlemen were unanimous, and were to the effect that the farm was very badly drained and in poor condition ; the rent was too high, and it could not be made to pay either as a cropping or as a dairy farm. As a result of this report, and in view of the fact that inside two months the Farming Association went into liquidation, it was decided to have nothing more to do with the proposal.

The Society had still some further trouble to face in connection with the Association however. A large quantity of hay had been bought and paid for, to be delivered as required, but when the liquidators came to examine the stock on the farm they claimed this hay as part of the assets of the Association, and a considerable amount of negotiation took place before the-

matter was settled. The final result was that, by the failure of the Association, the Federation lost £346, 14s. 7d.

#### ACCIDENTS.

Probably it was owing to the much greater number of vehicles now owned by the Federation, and the much larger number of persons employed, that the accidents recorded in the period with which we are dealing exceeded in number all those which have been recorded hitherto. Fortunately, many of them were not of a serious nature, but during the four years three fatal accidents took place. In one case a man was knocked down by a van belonging to the Society and killed, but the police report was to the effect that no blame attached to the driver of the van. Out of sympathy with the widow thus suddenly deprived of her breadwinner, however, the committee gave her a grant of £40. In another case a bricklayer lost his life, again without blame attaching to the Society, and in this case a grant of £20 was made to the widow; while the third case was that of a plumber employed by the Society, who died as the result of an accident at the bakery. In this case also a grant of £30 was made.

#### THE OATCAKE DEPARTMENT.

During the period under review an extraordinary development of the business of the oatcake department took place, and an aggregate addition of thirty-eight hot-plates for the use of this department alone was installed between March 1894 and July 1897. The committee did their best to push the trade, sending circulars and samples of the cakes to societies in the North of England, with results which were beneficial to the trade of the department. Later, a traveller was employed on salary and commission to push the Federation's goods amongst English societies. Another branch of the Society's trade which was making rapid strides every year was that of New-Year cakes. In 1896 18,870 five-pound cakes sold at the cake show, and in the following year the number rose to 25,000.

#### ADVERTISING AND ENTERTAINING.

The directors early recognised the value of a social meeting as a means of advertising the Society and its goods, and in December 1894 a large number of the ladies of the movement



were invited to inspect the premises of the Society and were afterwards entertained to tea. From that time it became a practice of the Federation to entertain branches of the women's guild, conference associations, etc., while they were generous in grants of bread to persons who were suffering from the effects of unemployment, whether caused by dullness in trade or strikes. During the winters of 1892-3 and 1893-4 large quantities of bread were distributed to those in want from the former cause, while during the continuance of the miners' strike and the engineers' strike further quantities were distributed and, in addition, a grant of £100 was made to the strike fund of the engineers. In 1895 an incident took place which at one time seemed likely to lead to friction between the two big Scottish federations. The Wholesale Society brought before its members a proposal to start a biscuit factory in Leith, with the result that the committee of the Baking Society sent out a circular to all the societies in the larger federation, protesting against the proposal as one which would set up competition between the two federations, and pointing out that it was in a position to meet all the needs of the societies in biscuits. Fortunately, the proposal went no further, and thus what would have been a bone of contention between the societies disappeared.

The Society also took advantage of every opportunity to bring the goods manufactured under the notice not only of Co-operators but of the general public. Beginning with the Congress exhibition in 1890, it continued to exhibit on every available opportunity. The Co-operative festivals which began to be organised provided suitable opportunities and, in order that the goods might be displayed as effectively as possible, a new showcase was procured from the Wholesale Society's cabinet-making department, at a cost of £200. In 1895 it was decided to issue a "Year Book" instead of the usual calendar. This "Year Book," which was compiled by Mr Lochrie, of the *Scottish Co-operator*, contained 231 pages, including advertisements and a street map of Glasgow, in which was shown the premises of the Wholesale Society and the Baking Society, as well as the tearooms of the latter Society. The principal feature of the book was a concise little history of the Baking Society to the date of its issue. In the following year Mr James Campsie, M.A., was commissioned to write a co-operative book for

children, with the title "Glimpses of Co-operative Land," of which over 20,000 copies were issued. At the opening of the extension of the bakery in 1897, in addition to the souvenir brooches which were issued to the lady delegates, similar brooches were presented to the lady employees of the Society, a kindly and thoughtful act which doubtless had its effect in cementing the good relationship existing between them and the directors. Amongst other visitors who were shown over the premises of the Society from time to time special mention is made in the minutes of a visit which was paid by the senior pupils from four Glasgow schools, accompanied by their teachers, who were escorted through the various departments and afterwards entertained to tea.

#### DONATIONS.

In the early days of the Society the directors were very careful of the money of which they were the trustees, although, even then, after the first few quarters had passed, donations, amounting at first only to £5 a quarter, but gradually increasing in amount as the Society increased in wealth, were given to various public philanthropic institutions, of which the infirmaries were the principal recipients. Now these donations had increased to £175 a year, while, in addition, during the period under review £50 had been granted to the Co-operative Festival Fund; three donations, amounting in the aggregate to £550, had been given to the building fund of the Co-operative Convalescent Homes Association; £50 was given to the Perth Congress Reception Fund; £100 to the Engineers' Strike Fund; £25 to the Cowdenbeath Society Fund; £100 in commemoration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee to the Royal Infirmary; two sums of £15 and £25 to the Municipal Election Fund of the Defence Committee; and £100 to the Indian Famine Fund; while £500 were guaranteed to the 1901 Glasgow Industrial Exhibition.

#### A WORKS DEPARTMENT.

With the beginning of the period the Federation's works department may be said to have been fairly launched. The first extension of the biscuit factory had been carried out under the Society's own auspices, and the foreman who had charge of that work was retained in the employment of the Society for repair work when the biscuit factory was finished. Then a

blacksmith's shop, which was a part of the buildings purchased by the Society in South York Street, was taken over by the Society, and a blacksmith was engaged ; to be followed shortly afterwards by a plumber and a painter. The first job of any size to be tackled by the Society's own building department, however, was the extension at the corner of Govan Street and South York Street. This job set the building department on its feet, for the total cost when finished was £29,000. From that time practically all the building work of the Society has been done by its own building department. At about the same time as the building department commenced a van building section also began work, and the first van was turned out complete in the middle of April 1896. So great was the demand for new vans, however, that for a time it could hardly be met. To some extent the boycott accounted for this, for the terrorism exercised by the traders' organisation extended to the van building firms as well as to others, and eventually all the work of this department was done either by the Federation's own department or by that of the Wholesale Society.

#### A FOUR YEARS' RECORD.

Before closing this chapter it may be well if we take a look at what had been accomplished during the four years with which it deals. At the close of the twenty-fifth year the Society was baking 1,254 sacks per week, while the turnover for the 117th quarter was 32,987 sacks, or 2,537 sacks per week ; so that, in four years and a quarter, the trade had more than doubled. The output of the biscuit factory had been doubled ; the output of the oatcake department had been increased manyfold, and notwithstanding the fact that several societies which were taking all their bread from the Federation at the beginning of the period had started baking for themselves before its end, the output in the bread baking department had come within a few sacks per week of doubling. An addition to the bakery had been erected at a cost of £29,000 ; new stables and workshops were in course of erection and nearing completion ; the purveying department and tearooms had been greatly extended ; a branch had been opened in Leith, for which extended accommodation had already to be secured, and a footing for the productions of the Society had been found South of the Border. The



Federation had stood the test of the most virulent attacks which all the malice of enemies could devise, and, like the whole movement, had emerged stronger than before ; while last, but by no means least, an educational fund had been started and an educational committee established. These four years show a record of growth and expansion which was phenomenal, and completely dwarfed all that had been done before. It lay with the period which followed to show that, rapid though it was, there was nothing which was mushroomlike in this growth.

## CHAPTER XII.

### CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT.

PROPAGANDA IN IRELAND—MR M'CULLOCH READS A PAPER—SEEKING TRADE IN ENGLAND—C.W.S. OBJECTIONS—THE SOCIETY AND ITS EMPLOYEES—A GENERAL MANAGER—THE TEAROOMS—THE DELIVERY QUESTION—GLASGOW EXHIBITION—IRISH VISITORS—EXTENSIONS—A PROVIDENT FUND DISCUSSED—STABLE INSPECTOR RESIGNS: POSITION ABOLISHED—IMPROVING FINANCIAL POSITION.

THE development, which had been so marked a feature of the Society's business ever since the removal from St James Street to M'Neil Street, continued during the next four years, if not with such markedly rapid progress as during those which have just been reviewed, at least at a rate which must have proved eminently satisfactory to directors and shareholders alike. One of the results of the slight slackening down of the rate of growth was that the directors had more time to devote to the thorough reorganisation of the business and to bringing all the knowledge and experience which they had gained to bear on its extension. They were not unmindful of the need for extension and reorganisation at the bakery itself, and this work received a good deal of attention during the period, but they also kept in view the desirability of bringing in new trade from every quarter where it could be procured, and so we find strenuous efforts being made to develop connections in England and Ireland, as well as to widen the scope of their operations in Scotland.

#### PROPAGANDA IN IRELAND.

The first attempt to do business with Irish societies was made in the summer of 1898, when Mr Petrie, traveller, and Mr Hamilton, director, visited a number of societies in the North, with the object of inducing them to do business with the Baking Society. This visit proved to be an eminently satisfactory one. Several good orders were secured, and at the Irish Conference,

which had been attended by Mr Hamilton, it had been agreed that the president of the Baking Society should be invited to read a paper on "Federated Baking Societies" to a later conference. This conference took place on the 27th of August, when, in addition to Mr M'Culloch, Mr Deans of the Scottish Section was present, and, at the request of the delegates, gave a report of the position of the boycott in Scotland. In the course of his report, Mr Deans pointed out that Mr Robert Walker, the organising secretary of the Traders' Defence Association, had already turned his attention to Ireland, and had held in Belfast a preliminary meeting with the merchants of that city. He had received an invitation to address a larger meeting at an early date, but Mr Deans expressed his confidence that, if an attempt was made to introduce the boycott there, the Co-operators of the North of Ireland would know how to deal with the situation.

The address of Mr M'Culloch was published in full in the local *Wheatsheaf* of the Lisburn Society, and from that report it appears that he began his address by quoting from Ben Jones: "If Co-operation is to be as rich in benefits to working people as its advocates have always expected it to be, it must be successfully and universally applied to the production and manufacture of all the commodities that are used or consumed by the human race." With this as his text he proceeded to develop his theme by pointing out that bread was the safest and best commodity with which to begin production, for it was the most important of all commodities. In times of dull trade they could do without everything which might be considered a luxury, but they could not do without bread. "The question which was before the conference that day," he proceeded—"Is it possible or is it desirable to have a Federated or United Bakery?"—depended so much on local circumstances that he was sure they would not expect him to give a definite answer, and what he proposed to do was to tell them what had been done in Scotland. After describing the progress of the U.C.B.S. from its inception, he examined the position in the North of Ireland. There there were five societies—Belfast, Lisburn, Portadown, Cullybackey, and Londonderry—with an approximate membership of 919 and a trade of £5,930 a quarter. Of these societies Londonderry was 101 miles distant, and it might be better at present not to consider that society, but, if they took



the other four, they found an approximate trade in bread and smalls of £720 a quarter. This represented a trade of 20 sacks per week to start with. Their distributive expenses, if they decided to start, would be greater because some of their trade would be 7, 25, and 32 miles away ; but on the other hand the possibilities of Belfast itself were so great that he thought they need have no difficulty in answering in the affirmative the question which they were considering, and saying that a Federated Bakery was both possible and desirable. Continuing, he said that if they decided to begin he would advise them to lease a small bakery with two ovens or more. They would thus require so much the less capital, and would gain time to acquire experience and confidence in themselves, and to inspire their members with the necessary confidence to invest their capital. If, on the other hand, they could not get a bakehouse, or preferred to build, he had prepared a plan for a bakehouse with two ovens, a barm cellar, flour store, stable, and van shed, which would cost approximately £600.

After some more practical hints had been given by Mr M'Culloch, the paper was thoroughly discussed, and the conference committee recommended that the paper should be read and discussed at a general meeting of each of the societies. This paper is of very considerable interest in a history of the United Co-operative Baking Society, for it may be claimed for it that it was the foundation of that bond of unity between the Co-operators of the North of Ireland and the U.C.B.S., of which the magnificent building at Ravenhill Avenue is the outward and visible token.

Meantime Londonderry Society had become a member of the Baking Society a week or two before this conference was held, and was followed a little later by Lisburn Society. Belfast Society did not join up until the end of 1900, and was followed by Armagh in June 1901.

#### SEEKING TRADE IN ENGLAND.

The work in England proceeded on somewhat different lines. There the Society worked on the plan of appointing travellers on commission. These activities of the Society, however, were not viewed with favour by the C.W.S. directors, and in May 1899 a meeting of representatives of the two boards took place,

at which the situation was discussed. The English Society complained of the action of the Baking Society in putting travellers on the road, and stated that from the report of the quarterly meeting which had appeared in the *Co-operative News* they had learned that it was the intention of the Baking Society to alter their rules so as to permit of the admission of English societies to the Federation. They contended that hitherto there had been a clear line of demarcation, and they regretted that the Baking Federation now saw fit to overstep this. In reply the representatives of the U.C.B.S. stated that they were not going into England for the purpose of competing with the C.W.S., but with the object of getting the Scottish trade there which was going past the movement at present, and they stated that if the C.W.S. had consented to become agents for the Baking Society when the last interview took place the present difficulty would not have arisen. The Baking Society representatives were pressed to withdraw their traveller, and, although they would not consent to do this, they promised that before any English society was admitted a member of the Baking Federation, the Wholesale Society would be acquainted with the fact.

Again in September of the same year a request that the Baking Society's travellers should be withdrawn from England was received from the Wholesale Society, but this the directors refused to do. Instead of withdrawing, two additional representatives were appointed in the following year, and, some time later, Mr Forshaw, the Society's traveller in the East of Scotland, was sent on a visit to Newcastle-on-Tyne and Gateshead, which resulted in good orders being received and shortly afterwards in Newcastle-on-Tyne Society joining the Federation. At the quarterly meeting, which was held on 2nd September 1899, the rules of the Federation were altered to permit societies which were not customers for loaf bread to become members on taking out not less than fifty shares in the Federation, and at the same meeting it was agreed to raise the value of the shares from 15/ to 20/ each. The date of the quarterly meetings was altered from the first Saturday to the third Saturday of the month, and the basis of membership was altered so that, instead of a second delegate being allotted for £160 of purchases, the purchases of the largest society, divided by fifty, formed the

basis of representation. It was also agreed that in future the balance-sheet be issued half-yearly instead of quarterly.

#### THE SOCIETY AND ITS EMPLOYEES.

Hitherto the relations of the Society with its employees had been cordial, but with the growth of the Operative Bakers' Trade Union restrictions began to be applied which sometimes worked a little unfairly against the Society, particularly in its competition with firms in which the bakers were not well organised. The directors always came to an amicable arrangement with the Union, however. A rather remarkable decision by the Union is referred to in the minute of 19th August 1898, which states that "A deputation from the Bakers' Union had waited on us anent our foreman having suspended thirty men for two half-days. This had been done owing to our stock accumulating, and this was explained to the deputation, who stated that the Union preferred the dismissal of men and jobbers taken on when required." The minute proceeds, "Although this was much against the wish of the committee, they had no alternative but to dismiss eight men from the smallbread department." The question was raised at the next quarterly meeting, and the chairman somewhat amplified the statement contained in the minute by stating that the difficulty had been with the biscuit bakers. At that season of the year, the trade in hand-made biscuits went down owing to the holiday season, and as it was not desirable that these biscuits should be kept too long in stock the foreman had suspended the men for two afternoons. The usual procedure was to do the pastry in the mornings and the biscuits in the afternoons, and the foreman thought it better to suspend the men than to do without the services of any of them. The Union pointed out that their great difficulty was to prevent this practice creeping in all over the city, as it might become a serious thing for the men. The sub-committee had a meeting with the men, and a vote was taken on whether they preferred to be suspended or that some of their number should be dismissed, when, by a very large majority, they voted in favour of suspension. The following week, however, they held another meeting under the auspices of their Union, at which they reversed their former decision, and intimated that they were now unanimously in favour of



dismissal, so that the committee had no alternative but to agree and engage "jobbers," although this meant increasing this class of worker.

At this time there was also some friction amongst the workers in the oatcake factory. When the oatcake factory was started, the women engaged mixed their own meal, but, later, with the object of introducing machinery into this section of the factory, a man was put in to do the mixing, as an experiment. The man was mixing for twenty-four women, who had only to do their own cutting and firing. The chairman explained that, as the result of a week's experiment, the foreman had fixed the number of parcels to be baked by these women at nineteen, which was the average of the numbers produced by all these women. All the women said the mixing of the dough was the heaviest part of the work, and the result was that those who were getting their dough mixed for them were finished before those who had to do their own mixing, and, in addition, with the new arrangement, the dough was more evenly mixed. The subject was not pursued further at that meeting, but from what took place at the following meeting, it seemed that it had been much canvassed in the interval, especially in Kinning Park Society. According to the chairman,

\*" There had been some discontent after the last general meeting, and they were just getting over it when certain statements were made in Kinning Park Society which again caused discontent amongst the girls. Previous to this question being raised, the girls were doing all that was asked of them without complaint. The system was an experiment, and would have been past that stage now had the question not been raised. It was the intention of the committee to consider the girls' wages in event of the trial being successful, but even that had been prevented now. As a result of the discussion, the work was not being done. The Society was not getting one third of the work which was being got by other bakers in this department. It had been stated also that the department was in an insanitary condition, and the gentleman who made the statement confessed that he had done so simply from report. It had been said that the girls were being slowly poisoned. The books of the Society, however, showed that that was not so, but that the average sickness here was not half of other departments where extreme heat had not to be contended with."

After some discussion and an expression of opinion that the chairman had vindicated the position of the board, the subject was again dropped. At a later period it was stated that the

\* *Co-operative News*, 10th December 1898.

arrangement referred to had proved so satisfactory that the wages of the girls were increased by 1/ per week.

At this meeting the appointment and wages of the engineer were discussed at some length, and it was suggested that the wages which were being paid to him were not enough for the job, but it was explained by the chairman that his wages would be raised after he had proved his capacity.

#### A GENERAL MANAGER.

The directors were gradually coming to the opinion that it was not possible for them to keep in that close touch with the work of all the various departments in their spare time which was necessary, and had discussed the subject on several occasions. The result was that a definite motion "to appoint a general manager" was tabled and was discussed on two or three occasions, after which a special committee was appointed to go into the whole question of the management of the Federation. When this special committee brought in their report, it was adopted in principle in the somewhat vague form, "that someone be appointed to represent the committee during working hours." Naturally, this gave rise to several questions at the following general meeting of the Society, but no definite expression of opinion for or against was forthcoming from the meeting, so that the committee were left to pursue their own way unfettered. This they did at a later meeting by advertising for a general manager, who should be possessed of a good, general knowledge of business, and be in sympathy with the movement. As to his duties, it was agreed that all goods should be purchased by the committee through him, and invoiced to one centre, and that he should conduct all correspondence and see that the instructions of the committee were carried out, as well as maintaining discipline, regularity, and good order. Mr James Bain, secretary, and Mr James Young, director, were amongst the applicants for the position, and, perhaps for that reason, it was decided to take a ballot vote on the seven candidates who had been interviewed. The result was that Mr Young was appointed, and it was agreed that he take up his duties on 29th May 1899.

#### THE TEAROOMS.

The tearoom adventure was proving only moderately successful, and, in reply to a question, the chairman admitted at

one meeting that the profit shown on the balance-sheet had all been made by the purvey department. At another meeting, he stated in reply to a question about electricity that at M'Neil Street, where they generated their own current, they found electric lighting to be cheaper than gas, but where they had to take their supplies from the Corporation it was more costly, his reply being—"In West Nile Street, where we get our supply from the Corporation, it is nearly killing the place." The organ of the Traders' Association made great fun of this remark, stating that "the tearooms in West Nile Street must be in a perilous condition when the difference in the cost of gas and electricity is nearly killing the business"; and went on to point out that "tearooms must have a practical proprietor." "Here, then, is an excellent example of the fact that where overcharges cannot be made on the goods sold, Co-operation cannot prosper." Doubtless the *Commercial Record* man was entitled to his little chuckle, but his premises being faulty, his conclusions were equally faulty. There were other factors than overcharges which entered into the failure of the U.C.B.S. to make a commercial success of their tearoom business, and led to its being finally abandoned. It is probable that the West Nile Street place was too large and too heavily rented to permit any firm, however experienced, to make tearooms a success in a back street. Then, the people who acquire the tearoom habit are business people, and are therefore not too friendly disposed to any Co-operative enterprise and, having a very wide choice of such establishments, their prejudices took them elsewhere. That Co-operative tearooms can be made a success, even in Glasgow, the Drapery and Furnishing Society has proved, but it is questionable whether Co-operative tearooms anywhere, which are not conducted as an adjunct to other businesses, and very near to central drapery or similar premises, have ever proved successful, and there is no place in Great Britain where the ordinary tearoom is so good as in Glasgow, and, therefore, where a Co-operative tearoom which is called to stand on its own legs, so to speak, has such strenuous competition to face.

In August 1899 Mr Robert Watson resigned to take over the management of the S.C.W.S. dining and purvey department, and a Mr J. M. Picken was appointed his successor. The management of the purvey and tearoom departments were also



separated. Mr Picken did not prove a success, however, and was succeeded by Mr Thomson. At the end of the lease, the Society decided to give up the Main Street purveying branch, but to keep on the tearooms. At several general meetings suggestions had been made that the Society should open tearooms of a cheaper class, to suit the pockets of the workers, and the committee made some inquiries about this but found that the rents in the city were very high. A place in Clydebank was considered but abandoned owing to the lack of accommodation, and also because of opposition to the project from the committee of Clydebank Society. It was decided finally to fit up the Main Street shop for this purpose, but, after a short trial, the tearoom there was given up.

#### THE DELIVERY QUESTION.

For some unexplained reason the people of Glasgow and district have always been particularly addicted to the consumption of new bread. Time after time efforts have been made to wean them from this indigestion-producing habit, but all in vain until the Great War came and with it a shortage of grain, necessitating the husbanding of the nation's bread supplies. Then, without any fuss, with scarcely a murmur even, the people submitted for two years to a restriction which prohibited the sale of bread until it had been out of the ovens for a period of at least twelve hours. This demand for new bread had always been a source of worry to the Baking Society. There was, on the one hand, the restrictions imposed by the Operatives' Union as to the hour of commencing work, which regulated the hour at which the bread came out of the ovens; on the other hand, there was the demand of the members of local societies for new bread at an early hour and, as a consequence, the demands by the societies for early delivery of bread. These demands for early delivery the Society was only able partially to meet; and the distance of some of the shops from the centre made it quite impossible that they should be supplied with bread which was steaming hot from the oven. Hence, week after week, the committee had to deal with complaints about lateness of delivery. Time after time the chairman appealed to societies at the quarterly meetings to be less insistent in their demands for hot bread, but without avail, for no sooner did one society

respond for a little to these appeals than others began to demand that they get the bread hot and early.

At length, toward the end of 1898, the subject was taken up by the Convention of City Societies, and the Baking Society's board being only too willing to render all the assistance in their power, a representative meeting was held in the Union Hall, West Nile Street, at which Mr James Bain, secretary of the U.C.B.S., read a paper. Mr Bain entitled his paper "Our Bread Delivery," and dealt at length with the craze for new bread and the difficulties which it imposed on bakers and baking firms. He began by describing the evil conditions which it had introduced into the baking trade, the principal of which was probably the "jobber," or half-day man. Alluding to a correspondence which had been going on in a Glasgow paper for some time, he said that they, in M'Neil Street, could not describe the jobbers as anything but clean, respectable, intelligent tradesmen, the majority of whom were only waiting until a regular opening occurred for them. Under a more humane system, however, they could all be dispensed with, and all the men required could be employed regularly. Mr Bain pointed out that the limited time between the hour when the bakers started work and that at which societies demanded that they should have their bread delivered was too short to allow the bread to be thoroughly and carefully prepared. The rush did not allow the bread room workers the time necessary to pack the vans carefully, so that it frequently happened that the bread was crushed and bruised into shapes it was never intended to assume. The demand for new bread also entailed great hardships on the bakers because of the early hour at which they had to begin work, and he was convinced, he said, that bread baked in the morning and delivered in the afternoon, and bread baked in the afternoon and delivered next morning, would be healthier and more suitable for use. All the medical opinion was against the use of new bread; certain chemical changes took place in the bread after it was baked and before it was fit for consumption, and some hours were necessary to permit these changes to take place. He suggested, as a remedy, that the Co-operative societies should lead the way in fostering a demand for stale bread, and that the bakers, through their Union, should assist in educating the general public into a more rational system.

Commenting on this subject, the *Scottish Co-operator* said :—

“ It is the duty of co-operators to make arrangements which will allow those who produce the bread to work under conditions which will allow them to live more enjoyable lives than they do at present. There are no reasons why they should not begin work at 6 a.m., and the first delivery of bread might be made by 11 o'clock, while that baked in the afternoon could be kept until next morning, and delivered as soon as the stores are open. All that is required to make this possible is a little rational co-operation between the Baking Society, the distributive societies, the salesmen, and the members.”

Unfortunately, this rational co-operation was not forthcoming ; the practice continued, and it required a world war, which accustomed the people to many other and greater inconveniences, to bring about a reform which practically everyone believes to be desirable.

#### GLASGOW EXHIBITION.

The Society had guaranteed £500 towards the expenses of the Glasgow Industrial Exhibition, and the directors were desirous of taking every advantage of the Exhibition as an advertising medium. At first it was proposed that there should be a joint Co-operative stall, in which the two Wholesale societies, the Paisley Manufacturing Society, and the Baking Society should take part. The S.C.W.S. had been trying to obtain a plot of ground, and had succeeded, on the understanding that they should pay £2,000 of the cost, and the U.C.B.S. £1,300, but this arrangement was departed from, on the ground, as stated in the Baking Society's minutes, that neither the English Wholesale Society nor the Paisley Manufacturing Society were taking part. The Baking Society then decided to proceed themselves and, after having made arrangements with two bakery machinery manufacturing firms, they made an offer for the right to erect a model bakery in the Exhibition. This offer was not accepted, however, although it was considerably higher than the offer which was finally accepted, the reason given being that the exhibit offered by the Baking Society was not likely to be so interesting as that of either of the two other firms which offered. The affair caused a considerable amount of discussion at the time, and the opinion was freely expressed that, while no doubt could be cast on the good faith of the Exhibition committee themselves, they had been misled by the experts whom they had consulted, and that the most interesting of the proposed exhibits,



as well as the one which would have paid the Exhibition committee best to accept, was that of the Baking Society. However, if they were unable to exhibit a model bakery in full working order, and including a biscuit oven as well as bread making, they were able to secure a stance where they were able to make a display of goods which attracted much attention.

Among other methods which they adopted to advertise their goods and to keep the salesmen of the societies in touch with new departments and new goods, was a monthly letter, which they issued to salesmen, in which attention was called to anything which was new. During this period, also, they began to pack their biscuits in fancy, enamelled tins, and these had a great sale. The cake shows also were proving of great value in increasing the trade in this Christmas luxury; each year's show meaning a big increase in sales; that for 1901 showing an increase of 6,255 large cakes and of 629 dozens of small cakes over the sales of the preceding season.

In the autumn of 1901 the delegates to the Irish Conference Association were the guests of the Federation in Glasgow, which provided them with lodgings and took them for visits to Shieldhall, the Bakery, and the Municipal Buildings, as well as for a drive round the principal places of interest in the city. In 1901 the Society won first prize for oatcakes at the Bakers' Exhibition held in the Agricultural Hall, London. Earlier, too, as a result of a discussion which had taken place at a meeting of Glasgow Town Council, the committee sent one of their loaves to the City Analyst to be analysed. The analyst's report was to the effect that the loaf had been weighed before being analysed; and he stated:—"We are of opinion that this is a loaf of the best quality. It contains an extra large proportion of albuminous compound and the minimum of water."

At the beginning of 1902 the directors agreed to furnish one of the bedrooms at Seamill Home, while another was furnished by the heads of departments, and, at the quarterly meeting immediately following, the delegates voted £500 as a donation towards the building fund for the Inland Home at Galashiels. Other donations were:—£20 to the Gladstone Memorial, £50 to the Festival Fund, £40 to the Indian Famine Fund, £50 to the Lord Provost of Glasgow's Special War Relief Fund, £25 to the Owen Memorial Fund, £500 to the Glasgow Technical

College Fund, and £20 to the Thomas Slater Testimonial, as well as smaller sums to many other deserving objects.

#### EXTENSIONS.

During this period the extensions were neither so numerous nor so extensive as in that which immediately preceded it, for the increase in trade did not continue at a rate quite so rapid, but, nevertheless, several rather important extensions were made. Entry into the workshops, which were in course of completion in the summer of 1898, was secured in the autumn of that year, and to the new stables shortly afterwards, and about that time it was agreed to extend the biscuit factory and to utilise the old stable building, after reconstruction, as a biscuit warehouse and packing department. A considerable number of new machines were also purchased, these including fourteen or fifteen "dough-dividers" of a new pattern, manufactured by Werner, Pfleiderer & Perkins Ltd., at a cost of over £200 each, and a machine for the manufacture of sugar wafers. Three new travelling ovens were also procured for the biscuit factory. At the June 1899 quarterly meeting power was given to complete the South York Street building, operations on which had been suspended for nearly two years. At a later period it was agreed to roof in the north end of the courtyard and build a new reel oven there. It was also decided to increase the accommodation for the oatcake factory, so that the number of hot-plates might be increased from 80 to 140.

A proposal which occasioned some discussion at one or two of the general meetings of the Society was that of the directors to begin a provident fund for the employees. A number of employees had a sick benefit fund of their own, but it was proving inadequate to meet the demands on it, and those in charge approached the directors for assistance. This was granted, but, as the directors recognised that unless it was placed on a more or less compulsory basis it was not likely to secure the necessary stability, they had several consultations with representatives of the employees, and then took a ballot vote of the whole of the employees on the proposals which were submitted to them. This vote showed a majority of three to one of the employees in favour of the scheme, which was then brought before the delegates for their consideration and approval.

Permission to hold a special meeting of the Society for the purpose of altering the rules to permit of a provident fund for the employees being established was granted, but at the special meeting the vote for the alteration of the rules was one less than the number necessary to give the requisite two-thirds majority, and so the proposal was defeated for the time being.

In the autumn of 1898 Mr Ballantyne resigned from his position of stable inspector, after having acted in that capacity for the long period of 28 years. At the quarterly meeting he was thanked for the long service he had given to the Society. The committee decided that the office should be abolished. Just at the end of this period it was decided to open a distributive depot in Falkirk, for the purpose of supplying the societies in that district. It was reported to the committee that there were altogether nineteen societies within a radius of twelve miles having 38 shops, which were purchasing over 500 tins of biscuits and 5,000 lbs. of oatcakes weekly. The new system was going to be more costly at the beginning, but the committee were under the impression that the trade would so increase under the new system that it would more than compensate for the additional cost.

At the end of 1901 the value of the Society's property, including land, buildings, and fixtures, was £145,450, while the share capital, reserve, and insurance funds amounted to £102,441. Thus 70·5 per cent. of the total value of the buildings was covered. At the end of 1889, only 23 per cent. of the value had been so covered, and, notwithstanding the great increase in the value of the properties which had taken place since that time, the capital, reserve, and insurance funds had increased so much more rapidly that this very desirable result had been achieved in twelve years. The trade had grown very rapidly also in the same period, and, just at the close of the period, permission was granted to the directors to hold a demonstration for the purpose of celebrating a turnover of 3,000 sacks per week.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### CLYDEBANK BRANCH.

PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS—THE BRANCH DECIDED ON—THE HUNT FOR A SITE—THE BUILDING ERECTED—INCREASING TRADE—FURTHER EXTENSIONS—A DISASTROUS FIRE—THE PREMISES REBUILT—A BAD SMASH—PRIZE WINNERS—GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

THE time was now fast approaching when the committee were to be called on once again to consider the question of branching out. For some time the members of Clydebank Society had been a little restive. They demanded new bread, and they demanded that they should have it early in the day. This demand the directors were finding it difficult to meet, for the campaign in favour of stale bread, with a later start in the mornings for the bakers and a reasonable working day, had not borne much fruit. At length, towards the end of 1900, a request for a deputation from the Baking Society's board was received from Clydebank directors. This deputation on their return reported that they had been informed that there had been an agitation among the members of Clydebank Society for a bakery of their own, and before they would do anything the committee of the society had wished to consult with the directors of the U.C.B.S. as to what the Federation was prepared to do. The deputation suggested that if the Clydebank directors would undertake to recommend to their members the erection by the U.C.B.S. of a branch bakery, they on the other hand would make the same recommendation to the delegates at the quarterly meeting. As Clydebank committee were divided in opinion on the matter, however, it was decided that the question should be delayed until further developments took place.

It was not until ten months after the events recorded above that anything further was heard of the proposal to erect a branch at Clydebank, and then it came in the form of information

that the society had agreed to erect a bakery for themselves. The directors of the Baking Society decided to send a letter expressing surprise that they had not been informed of what was proposed before the decision was arrived at. To this the Clydebank people replied that they would be willing to discuss the matter still; and another deputation was appointed to meet with them. In giving instructions to their deputation, the directors of the Baking Society decided to offer that, if the Clydebank Society delayed taking action, they would recommend to the first quarterly meeting of the Baking Society the erection of a branch to meet the needs of the Clydebank district. The result of this meeting was that a special meeting of the members of Clydebank Society was called, at which representatives of the Baking Society were invited to be present. The minutes are silent as to what transpired at this meeting, but, from the fact that at the quarterly meeting of the Baking Society the directors came forward with a recommendation that a branch be established in Clydebank, it is evident that the meeting had been of a friendly nature. The chairman, in supporting the proposal at the quarterly meeting, stated that the delivery of bread, which had much to do with the question being raised, had greatly improved in the interval; but as the question had again been brought up in Clydebank, the committee had considered the whole matter, and were of opinion that no further extension should be made at M'Neil Street in the meantime.

Delegates from Kinning Park and Cowlares moved delay, and the consideration of the question was put back for three months. At the next quarterly meeting, however, the chairman stated that the reasons which he had given at last meeting for the step which the board advocated had become more forcible in the interval. The trade of the Federation was growing so rapidly that if the delegates did not agree to this proposal something else would have to be done to lessen the congestion at M'Neil Street. On the recommendation being put to the vote, it was carried by a large majority.

Some little time elapsed, however, before suitable ground was procured and the plans approved, and it was not until the end of August that operations really commenced. Land was leased between Yoker and Clydebank at John Knox Street and abutting on the North British Railway, and here a large

building consisting of three storeys and attics was erected, having accommodation on two floors for thirty-two large draw-plate ovens. The upper floors were to be utilised as flour stores, and a large sifting and blending plant was erected. Ample lavatory and bath accommodation was provided for the workers, and arrangements were made at the back of the building whereby the railway wagons ran underneath a wing of the building, allowing the flour to be lifted direct from the wagons to the store. Ample stabling and van accommodation was provided at the end of the building, and the precaution was taken to secure sufficient land to render any future extensions easy. The interior walls were lined throughout with white glazed brick, and everything that skill could devise was done to make the new building a model bakery. The total cost of the new building and equipment was about £17,000, and all the work of erection was carried out by the Society's own workmen, while the Society could congratulate itself on the fact that no accident of any sort involving danger to life or limb took place during its erection.

Only eight ovens were erected at first, as it was thought that the production from these would meet the requirements of the societies in the district. Since then, however, further extensions have taken place. The first eight ovens erected were gas fired, but at the June 1904 quarterly meeting the directors in their report had to admit that the results had not been what were expected, and it was possible that some change might have to be made. The draw-plate ovens would be a distinct improvement if they could be made as steady and reliable as were the Scotch ovens, and Scottish engineers were directing their attention to this, the report stated. The difficulty with one section of the ovens continued, however, and before long it was decided to abandon gas-firing and fire by coke.

#### INCREASING TRADE.

It was not long before the manager was again reporting to the committee that the premises at M'Neil Street were being congested, and intimating that they would require to consider the building of additional ovens at Clydebank or else the opening of a branch in the east. The result was that four additional ovens were built on a plan devised by the engineer and foreman



## EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE



1. JOHN SIMPSON.
2. ALEXANDER BUCHANAN.
3. JOHN B. WALKER.
4. JOHN TOWART, Secretary.

5. JOHN YOUNG, Chairman.
6. JAMES H. FORSYTH, Treasurer.
7. JOHN URQUHART.
8. MARY KENNEDY.

9. HUGH MURDOCH.

# PRIZE SILVER BAND



H. A. MELLOR, Bandmaster.

WILLIAM MILLER, President.

JAMES THOMSON, Secretary.

baker, and called the "Scott-Richard" oven. By the 140th quarter the branch was in full working order, and the number of sacks baked that quarter was 2,502. The output of the branch continued to increase, and by the 148th quarter had risen to an average of 352 sacks per week. So rapidly had the sales of the branch grown that less than eighteen months after it was opened the directors found it necessary to add other three ovens, bringing the total up to fifteen. These also were of the Scott-Richard type.

By the beginning of 1906 the congestion at Clydebank and at M'Neil Street had become so great that it was decided to proceed with the completion of the Clydebank premises at a cost of £10,000. This extension provided for the erection of sixteen new ovens, thus practically completing the productive capacity of the building. The extension was completed in June 1907, and the June quarterly meeting was held in one of the flats there. Amongst other innovations introduced during the completion of this extension was a large water-storage tank of capacity sufficient to provide a day's supply of water in event of any breakdown in the public water supply. Provision was also made for electric power and light, and two electric lifts were installed.

At the meeting the chairman, Mr D. H. Gerrard, said the branch was up to date in every respect, and could be characterised as a modern bakery in every sense of these words, equipped with the latest and most improved means of production. It was an institution of which they need not be ashamed—indeed, he would say rather it was an institution of which they might be justifiably proud that they were the owners. They were exhorted in the Old Book that they should forget the things that were behind and press onward to the things that were before. In a general sense that advice was pretty good, especially when looking back might have a depressing effect on one's spirits; but it might be helpful to take a retrospect of the past and look for a short time on the day of small things: the days of their weakness, and ponder over them. After paying a tribute to the work done for the Baking Society by Mr M'Culloch, Mr Gerrard went on to suggest that the United Baking Society was one of the wonders of modern times, and was an eloquent testimony to the shrewdness and business



qualifications of the working men who had managed it during the thirty-eight years of its existence. Referring to the branch, he stated that it had now capacity for a trade of 1,400 sacks per week, and pointed out that since Clydebank bakery was commenced, in 1902, the trade of the Society had increased by nearly 1,500 sacks per week.

#### A DISASTROUS FIRE.

The new premises had only been opened for a few months when, one Sunday morning in October, those responsible for carrying on the work of the branch were horrified to discover that fire had broken out. The fire was first discovered by one of the men employed in the stables, whose attention was attracted by the sound of breaking glass. He at once raised the alarm, and while the local fire brigade was being summoned the stablemen did their best to overcome the fire, but without success. By the time the local fire brigade arrived the fire had gained a firm hold, and assistance was telephoned for to Glasgow. The appliances of the local brigade were not of much use, and all that the Glasgow brigade were able to do when they arrived was to confine the fire to the upper floors, which, with their contents, were completely destroyed. Fortunately the lower floors were fireproof, and beyond damage by water there was little harm done.

Arrangements were at once made to transfer the bakers in the Clydebank factory to M'Neil Street so as to cause the minimum of inconvenience to the customers of the Society, and an agreement was come to with the Operative Bakers' Union whereby the men were allowed to begin work an hour earlier in the mornings and two hours earlier on Saturdays while the reconstruction was taking place. Fortunately, very little damage was done to the lower part of the building; but it was decided that in rebuilding the upper portion it should be made entirely fireproof. For this reason it was decided that the new roof should be flat and of concrete. The damage done by the fire amounted to over £10,900. So quickly was the work of renovation begun that by the Saturday of the week in which the fire took place a temporary roof had been erected, and the work of baking had again been started. It is interesting to note here that Barrhead Society, which had, not long before,

completed the erection of a new bakery of their own, offered to place it at the disposal of the U.C.B.S. if they should require it ; but, fortunately, the directors found themselves in a position to decline this kind offer.

The facilities for extinguishing a fire of such magnitude possessed by Clydebank Town Council had proved to be quite inadequate for the purpose, and a strong protest was made by the board. Particularly the water pressure had been found quite inadequate for the work. By the beginning of December the directors had submitted plans to the Dean of Guild Court for the reconstruction of the premises, and these were passed on an undertaking being given that the boiler flue, to a defect in which it was supposed that the fire had been due, would be built to the satisfaction of the master of works. The building was quickly completed, and soon work was in full swing again.

#### A BAD SMASH.

In the month of January 1909 a bad smash took place in Partick between a motor van from Clydebank bakery and two Glasgow tramcars, in which damage amounting to £174 was done to the van. This accident gave rise to counter-claims by Glasgow Corporation and the U.C.B.S., but it was not until June 1910 that the case was finally disposed of, the Sheriff finding that the driver of the Bakery motor van was entirely to blame for the collision. The case aroused considerable interest at the time because of the legal aspect of the question as it affected the "rule of the road" in connection with the passing of cars which ran on rails in the middle of the streets or roads. By that decision it was decreed that fast vehicles passing tramcars going in the same direction should do so on the left side, whereas the ordinary rule of the road in Scotland decrees that all other vehicles must be passed on the right side. The total cost to the U.C.B.S. of the accident, including litigation costs, was almost £1,700.

In 1909 the Clydebank branch achieved fame by winning first prize in the loaf-baking competition conducted by the S.C.W.S., and the presentation of the shield was made the occasion of a social meeting, at which the president of the Society presided, and the presentation of the shield was made by Mr Stewart, president of the Wholesale Society. At the meeting

a number of complimentary things were said about Mr Reid, foreman, and the work of the bakery which he controlled. In the following year Clydebank lost the shield, but were successful in winning several prizes for smallbread.

During the first ten years after the branch was opened the progress continued steady, the turnover for the tenth year amounting to 35,638 sacks, equal to an average output of 687 sacks per week. At this time it was decided to extend the bakery, and eight new ovens were put in. Just before the outbreak of war the branch secured the contracts for supplying the Territorial camps at Jamestown and Dunoon, and as soon as war was declared and mobilisation begun it was kept very busy with orders for military use, and, later, secured a big contract to purvey for Navy men. The output continued to increase steadily. By 1915 it had risen to 1,000 sacks per week, and by 1917 to 1,038 sacks. With the coming of Government controlled flour and the consequent unpalatable bread a decrease took place in the output, from which the branch was just beginning to recover at the period with which this history of its operations ends. During the fifteen and a half years since its erection over 520,000 sacks of flour were turned into bread, and the congestion at M'Neil Street was relieved to that extent; while the primary purpose for which the branch was erected, that of ensuring to the societies on the western side of the Society's delivery radius an earlier supply of bread each day, was accomplished to their satisfaction, and the Co-operative production of bread was stimulated by means of the increased orders secured. There can hardly be any doubt but that the policy adopted by the directors of branching out where a branch could be carried on successfully has found its justification in the success which has attended Clydebank branch since its formation, and that until now the fears entertained by those who opposed this policy at the beginning have not been supported by the results achieved.

With the growth and prosperity which has come to Clydebank and the neighbouring portion of Greater Glasgow, and with the further growth of that prosperity which the future seems likely to bring with it, the success of the branch is assured, and the probability is that before many years have passed further extensions will have been rendered necessary by the



expansion of trade. Unquestionably the erection of the branch was an experiment. It was a departure from what had been hitherto the established policy of the Federation, but it was an experiment which was justified by the circumstances of the time, and was the first step in a policy which has since brought not only the societies on Clydeside into close Co-operation with the Federation, but has had the same effect in the North of Ireland, and it is a policy which is spreading in both countries to the advantage of the Co-operative movement.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### BELFAST BRANCH.

CO-OPERATION IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND—EARLY BAKING PROPOSALS—DISPUTE WITH LOCAL BAKERS—SCOTLAND TO THE RESCUE—A TEMPORARY BAKERY—EXPANDING TRADE—THE BAKERY COMPLETED—THE OPENING CEREMONY—GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT—GROCERS AS AGENTS FOR BREAD—EXTENSIONS NECESSARY—THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE—CONTINUOUS PROGRESS—A SERIES OF EXTENSIONS—SOME RETAIL SOCIETY FAILURES—HELP FOR DUBLIN STRIKERS—GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS—A REGRETTABLE ACCIDENT—THE FEDERATION'S GENEROSITY—THE WAR AND ITS EFFECTS—OATCAKE BAKING STARTED—THE BELFAST STRIKE—A TRADE UNION TESTIMONIAL—THE INFLUENCE OF THE U.C.B.S. ON IRISH CO-OPERATION.

THE Co-operative movement in the North of Ireland is a plant of comparatively recent growth. In the early 'nineties of last century there were only some four or five retail societies in the whole North, and most of them were far from strong—so weak, indeed, that two of them afterwards went down. When they came under the control of the Co-operative Union they were placed under the wing of the Scottish Sectional Board, and that Board undertook a large amount of propaganda work which had the effect of strengthening the existing societies and of leading to the formation of new ones. Amongst those which were formed as the result of this propaganda zeal on the part of Scottish Co-operators the strongest which remain to-day are Armagh and Portadown, but the work of Co-operation in Lisburn and Belfast was strengthened materially by the propagandist efforts of the Scottish enthusiasts.

At that early period the society which then existed in Londonderry was probably the strongest in the whole of Ireland, and it was the first Irish society to become a member of the United Baking Society, but, unfortunately, the closing down at a later period of the work in which the majority of the members were employed led, indirectly at least, to its collapse. Another society which was only able to struggle on for a few years was

that situated at Lurgan. Belfast was in a bad way. It had practically no capital and was carrying on by the aid of bank overdrafts. Nor at that time was Lisburn in much better case.

#### EARLY BAKING PROPOSALS.

Through the visits of Mr James Deans and of other Scottish propagandists the societies in the North of Ireland began to hear tales of the success which was attending the work of the Federated Baking Society in Glasgow, while in 1898 the Baking Society sent over Mr Petrie and one of the directors on a propaganda tour, with the view of opening up a business connection with the Irish societies. These gentlemen attended a meeting of the Irish Conference Association, and Mr Hamilton told the delegates something of the work which the Federation was doing, with the result that some good orders were received. It was as a result of this visit that Londonderry Society joined the Federation, to be followed in succeeding years by Lisburn and Belfast. It was as a result of this visit also that Mr M'Culloch, President of the Baking Society, was invited to read a paper on "Federated Baking" at a conference which was held in Belfast in August of the same year. There was no immediate fruit from the reading of Mr M'Culloch's paper, but when, some years later, the private baking firms in the North of Ireland began to apply the screw to Irish Co-operators the proposals he had made were recalled and a deputation was sent over to seek help. Meantime the societies in Ireland were increasing in number and in strength. Lisburn had started into new life; Armagh and Portadown societies had been formed; and Belfast was making headway slowly but surely. Until this time little trade in bread had been done by the U.C.B.S. with the Irish societies, the bulky character of the commodity and the long distance from the centre militating against this, although for a time at least 'Derry Society had bread sent over in hampers.

#### DISPUTE WITH LOCAL BAKERS.

It was in 1903 that the private bakers in Ireland began to show their hostility to Co-operation. At first this hostility did not take the form of an absolute refusal to supply bread, but the equally effective one of reducing the discount allowed and at the same time refusing to undertake delivery. In Belfast



the society was badly hit by this policy, and in their need they applied to the U.C.B.S. for assistance, asking them to supply the society with bread and at the same time to take into consideration the opening of a branch bakery in Belfast. Belfast Society followed up their letter by a deputation, and as a result of the interview the Bakery Board agreed to supply the society with bread in the meantime and also to lend them two vans to enable them to distribute the bread to their members.

At the June quarterly meeting of 1903 a Belfast deputation again attended to plead their cause with the delegates. Mr Gilchrist was their spokesman and made a lengthy statement, explaining the friction which had arisen between the society and the local baking firms and the steps which the society had taken to meet the difficulty. He stated that the membership and trade of the society were both increasing rapidly, and made a strong plea that the Federation should come to their help by planting a branch bakery in Belfast. The result was that power was given to the committee of the Federation to help Belfast Society in any way possible. One of Kinning Park delegates moved an amendment to the effect that power be not given, but this amendment did not meet with much support.

The result of this decision was that the Committee appointed a deputation to visit Belfast with the object of finding out the real position there and what buildings or land might be available for the planting of a branch. A bakery, consisting of two Scotch ovens and one drawplate oven, together with the necessary bakery plant, had been discovered, and seemed a suitable place, while the price was £750, but it was ultimately decided that ere making an offer all the Irish societies should be consulted as to the best method of assisting Irish Co-operation under the circumstances. By the time the replies to the letters sent had been received, however, the Committee were informed that the bakery they had under consideration had been sold, with the result that the manager and secretary of Belfast Society were requested to supply particulars of other vacant sites, and particularly of open ground suitable for building on. When these reports came to hand they contained particulars of six different plots of ground, ranging from one acre to five acres in extent, and with prices ranging from £26 per acre to £60 per acre—the latter price, however, including the making

of streets. With these reports before them the Committee decided to delay coming to any decision until after the question had been again before the quarterly meeting, but to go forward to the quarterly meeting with a recommendation that a branch be erected at Belfast.

#### SCOTLAND COMES TO THE RESCUE.

At this time the position in Belfast warranted fully the optimistic tone in which Mr Gilchrist had spoken three months earlier of its future. The society had been established for fourteen years and its sales were rather more than £30,000 a year. It was not their size, however, but the rapidity with which they were growing which led to the optimism of those who were responsible for the management of the society. In one year they had grown from £5,000 a quarter to £10,000 a quarter. From the one tiny branch in Shanklin Road the society had grown until it was now the owner of four branches, and the members continued to join the society in large numbers. All this the delegates had found out during their visit to Belfast, and they considered that the facts justified the recommendation they were making—that a branch should be established there.

In bringing the recommendation before the delegates the chairman stated that Belfast Society was purchasing at the moment from 400 dozens to 500 dozens of bread weekly, notwithstanding the fact that the bread was a day old before they received it. The membership of Belfast Society was 1,200, and was increasing rapidly, and both manager and committee were of opinion that the trade would be doubled if they had a bakery on the spot which could supply them with new bread daily. While a sum of £2,000 or £3,000 would be sufficient to erect a bakery which would meet present requirements, the idea of the Federation directors was that sufficient land should be acquired and they should build on a plan which would permit of expansion in the future. The directors, he concluded, were unanimously of opinion that not only would a branch bakery be of immediate service to Belfast Society, but that it would consolidate and strengthen the whole movement in the North of Ireland, while it could be established without any serious risk to the Federation. The motion that the proposal of the directors be approved was moved by Mr Duncan of Kinning

Park, who had moved the rejection of the proposal to give assistance three months earlier, and the recommendation received the unanimous approval of the delegates.

Thus the fateful decision was taken—a decision which, as Irish Co-operators will be the first to acknowledge, was fraught with possibilities of immense good to Ireland, possibilities which have fructified into actualities as the years have passed. The decision strengthened the hands of Belfast Society at the moment, but it has done far more during the period which has intervened, for the powerful aid which the U.C.B.S. has been ever able and ever willing to render has made it possible for the Irish societies in the North, at a time when no one of them was overburdened with capital, to devote what capital they did possess to the extension of their businesses in other directions, secure in the knowledge that the staff of life was assured to their members for such period as they were able to make reasonable provision for the payment of the services thus rendered.

#### THE BAKERY.

Having secured the approval of the delegates for their proposals, the first duty which devolved on the directors was that of finding a suitable site. In order that all the members of the committee might be able to come to decisions with the fullest knowledge obtainable, they decided at the outset that they should visit Belfast in a body, and inspect the various sites of which they had information, meantime delaying the final decision. Eight different sites were examined, and, ultimately, the final decision rested between two of these, that at Ravenhill Avenue being the one which finally found favour, at a rental of £80 per annum. Mr W. J. Gililand, Belfast, was appointed architect, and was instructed to prepare plans for a temporary bakery, containing four ovens, to meet immediate needs, before proceeding with plans for the general building. At a later meeting it was decided that the delivery of the bread should be undertaken by Belfast Society, and that special terms should be arranged for this service. By January the temporary building had been commenced, and by the beginning of June was ready to begin operations. Mr George Forshaw, East of Scotland representative, was appointed commercial manager and Irish traveller, and Mr James Moffat, Belfast, foreman



baker. Baking was begun on 2nd June, the temporary building having been fitted-up with one Scotch oven and three draw-plate ovens. Unfortunately, a dispute between the architect and the Corporation of Belfast had hindered the erection of the temporary bakery for a little, but, during a special visit paid to Belfast, Mr Young, manager, was able to arrange matters amicably. Nevertheless, the dispute cost the Society over £18 in legal and other expenses.

The area in which the Society's bread was used soon began to widen. At first Belfast was practically the only customer, but in the course of a month or two society after society became customers, so that by the beginning of August there were five societies, in addition to Belfast, customers for bread. This good result was due to visits which had been paid by some members of the directorate to the committees of the societies. At the same time, Lurgan Society applied for membership and was admitted.

It was not until the middle of November that tenders for the completion of the main building were accepted, and then the committee had not finally made up their minds how much of the work they were going to complete at once, but reserved to themselves power to stop with the completion of the front section if they thought this plan desirable. When the matter was further considered in March, however, the committee were unanimously of the opinion that the building should be two storeys in height.

#### THE BAKERY COMPLETED.

Some of the difficulties which had worried the committee so much when the first section of the M'Neil Street building was under construction manifested themselves again at Belfast, and it was found that it was not in Glasgow alone that builders were dilatory. The committee had hoped that the finished building would be ready for opening in September, but it was not until April of the following year that it was completed. The building erected contained provision for eighteen ovens on two floors; but at first only nine ovens were built on the ground floor, the upper floor being used for storage purposes. The ovens were of the draw-plate type, and amongst the machinery installed was an automatic dough-divider and handing-up machine, capable of weighing accurately 2,800 loaves per hour.

Elaborate arrangements were made for the opening ceremony, for truly it was a great day for Ireland. All the societies in the Federation were invited to send delegates to Belfast, and provision for their conveyance and comfort was made by the Baking Society. The U.C.B.S. band accompanied the party, and discoursed sweet music during the journey from Ardrossan to Belfast. After spending the hours of Sunday in whatever manner they felt inclined, the delegates were driven in brakes on the Monday morning to Ravenhill Avenue. The procession, for that is what it amounted to, attracted great attention as it drove through the streets of the city with bands playing. Doubtless, many of the good folks of Belfast wondered what all the noise was about, for at that time Co-operation had but a very small share in the commercial life of the commercial capital of the Green Isle, and it is quite likely that many thousands of the inhabitants of the city knew nothing of the momentous event which was going to take place that morning. To many of them Co-operation was only a word, the meaning of which they did not understand, and to many more even the word was unknown.

At the opening ceremony Mr James Bain, the secretary of the Federation, presided, and, in the short speech he delivered in introducing Mr Gerrard, who was to declare the premises open, he voiced the true spirit of Co-operation. Their meeting, he said, was a public assurance that wherever the brotherhood of Co-operation existed, no matter whether a society was in the throes of adversity or rejoicing in the hope of prosperity, they were ready to lend a helping hand in adversity or to share in the joys of prosperity. When the word had come to Scotland that their Celtic brothers were in need of assistance the U.C.B.S., in season and out of season, had done their best to give the needed help. He was glad that the request they had made had been so far acceded to, and that they were there on that glorious Easter Monday morning to witness its fruition. They looked forward to the new branch as a means of consolidating and advancing Co-operation not only in the North of Ireland but throughout the whole of Ireland. It was only their first branch, but they were looking forward to the time when they would have a great many more branches scattered over the whole of Ireland.

Mr Gerrard had presented to him a handsome gold key with which to open the door of the building. In declaring the

premises open, he said they were that day marking an important epoch in the history of Co-operation. In Ireland distributive Co-operation could not be said to be flourishing like the green bay tree. On the contrary, its progress had been slow and its development difficult. In that the progress of the movement did not differ from its progress elsewhere. Everywhere there had been societies which were weak, but in Ireland, as elsewhere, those who constituted the membership had struggled heroically. Under difficulties and discouragements, before which many would have gone under, they had endeavoured to hold fast that which they had, and taking encouragement to themselves from their belief that the principle of associated effort for mutual benefit, which they represented but feebly, would ultimately be grasped by their fellow-countrymen and would work for their common good, they had struggled on.

Later in the day luncheon was served in the Y.M.C.A. Hall, after which more congratulatory speeches were delivered, the speakers including, besides Mr Gerrard, Mr Richardson (president of Belfast Society), Mr James Deans, Mr Duncan M'Culloch, Mr Robert Fleming, Mr Alexander Hamilton, and others, after which the Scottish visitors joined the steamer again *en route* for home; which, however, many of them did not reach without discovering that "a life on the ocean wave" was not without its drawbacks.

The opening of the new bakery at once sent the trade up with a jump; so much so that, at the close of the half-year which ended in July, a profit of £550 was shown as compared with a profit of £116 for the half-year which ended in January. During the half-year 3,853 sacks were baked, an increase of 59 per week over the previous half-year, notwithstanding the fact that the large bakery had only been working for three months. From that time onward the output showed a practically continuous increase. The reasons for this were many. The Irish societies in the North were increasing in membership and strength, and new societies were being formed and were joining the Federation. Particularly was this increase in membership and strength notable in Belfast, where the movement has never looked back since the opening of the bakery. The quality of the bread had also something to do with the increase in trade. Before the temporary bakery had been long in existence the foreman sent samples of



his workmanship to the Bakers' Exhibition held in the Agricultural Hall, London, where he was successful in securing first and third prizes. This superiority in the quality of the bread baked has been maintained throughout the life of the branch. So superior, indeed, was the bread baked at Ravenhill Avenue that Belfast Society found their bread trade a useful feeder for their membership roll, customers joining the society as members for bread only at first, and gradually going on to the purchase of other goods until they became full-fledged members purchasing from every department.

The committee were assiduous in their endeavours to maintain and increase the sale of their products. Thus, when owing to lack of enthusiasm Banbridge Society gave up business, the Society decided to continue on the road the van which had been working for that society, employing the man who had done the work for the society, so that the bread connection might not be lost. So successful did this method prove that in a comparatively short time they were employing another horse and van as well. Their bread was becoming so famous in the North of Ireland that grocers in the outlying villages were anxious to become agents for it, and, after consideration, the committee agreed, with the proviso that this should not be done where there was a Co-operative society in the place.

In order that the delegates of the Irish societies might become familiar with the Society and its work the committee also invited the Irish Conference Association to hold their conference under the auspices of the Federation. So successful were all these means of propagating the sale of bread that, before the new bakery had been in operation for a year, the foreman baker was approaching the committee with a proposal for more oven accommodation.

The Society had given horses and delivery carts on loan to the societies when the bakery was started, but it was felt that this method of conducting the business was not satisfactory and could not be allowed to continue indefinitely, so letters were sent to the societies inviting them to a conference at which the whole question of delivery could be discussed. At this conference, which took place in July 1907, the board proposed that these horses and vans be handed over to the societies, the Federation, however, retaining a lien on them for three years

so that, in the event of any society discontinuing the purchase of bread inside that time, the Federation could resume possession. It was also agreed that, in future, the Federation should deliver the bread at the place most convenient to each society, but that each society would be responsible for delivering the bread to its own members. This arrangement was approved by the representatives from the Irish societies who were present at the conference.

Already, at the beginning of 1907, the bakery was proving too small for the work which had to be done, and by the middle of the year it was decided to add three more ovens, while by the end of the year it had become necessary to extend the bakery, and it was agreed that this should be done, at a cost of almost £3,000. At the end of 1907, also, Mr George Forshaw resigned his position as manager of the branch, and Mr Duncan M'Innes, who was in charge of the branch at Falkirk, was appointed manager in his place.

#### THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

The members of the board had now had almost a year's experience of managing Belfast Branch, and had come to the conclusion that in order that the work should be carried on satisfactorily in every respect it was desirable that representatives of the local societies should be associated in the management. For this purpose they drew up a scheme for an advisory committee, to consist of three representatives of Irish societies. These proposals were approved by the delegates at the quarterly meeting, and were afterwards submitted to representatives of the Irish societies and approved by them. Mr Robert Fleming, Belfast, was appointed convener of the committee, and associated with him were Messrs Crook, Lisburn, and Palmer, Portadown. The constitution of the Advisory Committee was as follows :—

The committee shall consist of three members—one of whom shall act as convener and correspondent.

They shall be elected at a meeting of representatives of Irish societies to be summoned by the board of management in the month of July in each year. They shall hold office for two years.

Their duties, generally, shall be to supplement the efforts of the board of management in developing and consolidating the business of Belfast branch. To this end, they shall meet and confer with those members of the board who visit the bakery monthly. They shall

keep in touch with the several societies in the Federation, and advise as to the most economical means of serving them. They must visit the societies when commissioned to do so by the board, and carry out any particular duties assigned to them—such as attending monthly meeting, conferences, verifying stocks, etc.

They shall be paid at the same rate as the members of the board of management doing the same work.

From time to time since then the constitution of the advisory committee has been amended and its membership added to. Very shortly after its formation it was increased to four members; in 1912 another member was added; and in September 1918 yet another, making the membership now six.

An important amendment of the constitution was made in 1912, when it was altered to the following:—

The committee shall consist of five members—chairman, secretary, and three society representatives.

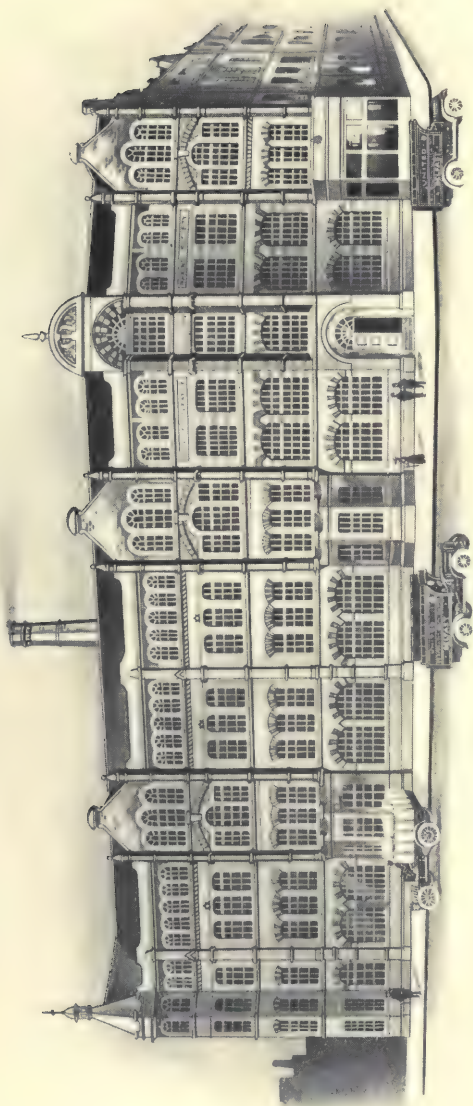
They shall be elected at the annual meetings of representatives of federated Irish societies held in July of each year, and shall hold office for two years (societies shall be entitled to representation at such meetings in like proportion as to quarterly meeting immediately preceding). The chairman and one society shall be elected in alternate years with the secretary and two societies. If through death, resignation, or otherwise, a vacancy should occur in the case of an ordinary member, his society shall fill up the vacancy, and in the case of an official the committee shall have the power to fill up the vacancy from their own number, subject to the approval of the following general meeting.

Their duties generally shall be to co-operate with the board of management in developing and consolidating the business of the Belfast branch. A sub-committee, consisting of the secretary and one member (members of the committee attending in rotation for the purpose), shall be held not later than Thursday in each week except in such weeks as full meetings of the committee shall be held, as hereafter provided. They shall inspect the premises and plant, noting anything requiring attention of manager or board of management. They shall afterwards receive reports (on prescribed forms) from distributive and productive managers, who shall both be in attendance to supplement and explain verbally the reports submitted by them. The manager shall further report any complaints received, and the steps, if any, taken to remedy the matters complained of. He shall also report purchases made and any contracts entered into for supply of goods.

All correspondence from board of management or elsewhere bearing on the work of the branch shall be taken up and dealt with.

A copy of the minutes of each sub-committee meeting, with any recommendations the committee desire to make, shall be forwarded





BELFAST BAKERY



ST MUNGO HALLS

by the secretary to the board of management in time for consideration at the board's weekly meeting held on Friday.

Full meetings shall be held on the second and last Saturdays of each month or other convenient dates, three to form a quorum. Two representatives from the board of management shall attend one of these meetings. Cost and profit statements and statistics of trade with societies for previous month shall be submitted and considered at this meeting. Matters of general policy and questions remitted from board of management shall be discussed with visitors. Minutes of all sub-committee meetings shall be submitted for confirmation to next full meeting. Distributive and productive managers shall be in attendance at all meetings.

Appointments for stocktaking, quarterly meetings of the Federation, visits to societies, conferences, etc., shall be made and reports of same received at full meetings.

The manager shall consult the members of the advisory committee when it is possible to do so on matters requiring to be dealt with between meetings, but this general instruction shall not prevent him acting on his own initiative when circumstances demand an immediate decision.

They shall be paid at the same rate as the members of the board of management doing the same work.

In 1917 Mr R. Fleming, who had acted as convener of the advisory committee from its formation, was elected a member of the board of the C.W.S. This necessitated the resignation of his position on the advisory committee, which took effect at the annual meeting with the Irish societies in July of that year. Mr J. M'Guffin, president of Belfast Society, was elected his successor, and the thanks of the Bakery board and of the Irish delegates were accorded to Mr Fleming for the work he had done for the branch. At the quarterly meeting of the Federation in Glasgow which was held in June Mr Fleming was present, and there also the thanks of the delegates were conveyed to him by the chairman in an appreciative speech, to which Mr Fleming made fitting response.

In 1918 there were some differences of opinion on questions of management between the advisory committee and the board of management, with the result that the advisory committee suggested resigning in a body from their offices. This course of action did not commend itself either to the board of management or to the delegates, and the cause of friction was removed by another alteration of the constitution of the advisory committee, which gave that body another member. The principal alteration, however, was contained in the following



clause which was added to the paragraph in the 1912 constitution which dealt with "Duties" :—

"Should any difference arise between the committee and the board of management which cannot be adjusted by correspondence, a joint meeting of both bodies shall be convened, and the matter determined by their united vote."

This clause has the effect of giving the Irish societies one-third of the total representation on the board of management when matters affecting Ireland which are controversial in their nature are being discussed and, while maintaining that supremacy which is the right of the larger and more powerful section of the Federation, ensures that the case of Ireland shall be put and determined in an atmosphere in which the fullest consideration will be given to the arguments adduced.

#### CONTINUOUS PROGRESS.

Already the new bakery was becoming too small for the work, and in August 1908 it was agreed to complete the central portion of the building by the addition of other two storeys at a cost of £2,263. Just prior to this time, however, the committee felt compelled to dispense with the services of their foreman baker, and Mr W. H. Bell, who had been his assistant, was appointed in his place. For several years Belfast Society used the stable at the bakery for stabling their horses, while they were also permitted to erect a cart shed and a shoeing forge. Later this society erected stables, etc., for themselves on property adjoining the bakery, and the ground which had been occupied by them was utilised by the Federation for necessary extensions to the bakery.

By March 1909 the extended premises were ready for occupation. It was not long ere the directors were in the mortar tub again, however, for another extension costing almost £4,000 was entered on in the autumn of 1910; and not long after it was completed there came, in December 1911, an urgent request from the advisory committee for more ovens, and another extension, at a total cost of almost £5,000, was entered on and completed in 1912. These various extensions practically completed the bakery as it stands at present, except for alterations, minor in themselves, which were made from time to time during the war period with the object of increasing the working facilities.

In July 1909 the committee recorded their satisfaction that the average weekly sales from the bakery amounted to £1,219, while in March 1910 the weekly turnover had reached 500 sacks ; and to meet the increasing demand three new ovens had to be erected. The Bakery continued to win prizes at the Agricultural Hall and other exhibitions, thus proving that Co-operative bread baking on a large scale was equal to producing bread of the finest quality.

Early in 1910 the directors were saddened by the news that one of the members of the first advisory committee, Mr Crook, of Lisburn, had passed away.

Although most of the societies in the North were doing well, there were one or two which were in a bad way. In 1908 Lurgan Society had to close its doors. The Federation were creditors to the extent of £114, and when settling day came it was found that the assets of the dead society were only capable of returning 1/6 in the pound. In 1910 Newry Society went the same way. The Federation were creditors to the extent of £200, and it was expected that the assets would realise 10/ per pound. In Newry the Federation made temporary arrangements to carry on the bread trade, as had been done in Banbridge, but after some time this course was abandoned.

Shortly after the new bakery was opened the two Dublin societies were in consultation with the committee of the Federation about the erection of a bakery, and the committee agreed to assist them. The two societies were unable to agree, however, and the idea of a federal bakery for Dublin was departed from. In 1910 Dublin Industrial Society erected a bakery for themselves, and the opening of this bakery was followed in a short time by the amalgamation of the two societies. The Dublin Society, however, experienced considerable difficulty in acquiring the knack of baking good bread—their position in this respect recalls some of the earlier experiences of the U.C.B.S.—and the Federation readily consented to Mr Bell or his assistant visiting Dublin to put them on right lines. In 1913, when the distress due to the strike was at its height in Dublin and the Trade Unions Congress was coming to the rescue with financial support, the Industrial Society received a contract for the supply of from 3,000 to 5,000 loaves daily. As they were unable to handle the contract in their own bakery they

secured the assistance of the U.C.B.S. bakery in Belfast, which supplied them with the needed quantity of bread during the period covered by the contract. Later, during the period of the war, the Industrial Society was in considerable difficulty for a time, and those responsible for its management were exceedingly anxious that the U.C.B.S. should take over the bakery. This was not done, however, and fortunately the society was able to maintain and even to improve its position.

#### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

At the beginning of 1909 the Bakery secured a contract for the supply of bread and flour to Newtownards Barracks, and since then have supplied from time to time that Barracks, as well as those of Holywood, Belfast, and Kilroot, while, either directly or through local societies, they have been successful in securing contracts for various local institutions, one society during the war securing the contract for the Admiralty.

In 1912 the Society had loaned some motor lorries for an excursion, and during the day a painful accident took place whereby one child was killed and three others were severely injured. The Society's motorman was completely exonerated from blame for the accident, but in token of their sympathy the Society paid the doctor's fees and granted £55 to the relatives. In 1913 two of the societies were experiencing difficulty in selling the bread because of the unfair competition to which they were being subjected in attempts to cause them to give up the bread trade, but the Federation came to their assistance by allowing them a little additional discount on their purchases. In 1911 the Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society was appointed agent in Ireland for the Federation, and some time later it was stated that since that federation had become agent the trade had increased. At the Dublin Congress in 1914 the Federation erected a scone and oatcake baking plant as part of their exhibit in the Congress exhibition, and this exhibit was an object of much interest to the Dublin visitors to the exhibition.

#### THE WAR AND ITS EFFECTS.

In Ireland, as in Scotland, the commanding position of the U.C.B.S. had a steady effect on the price of bread at the



outbreak of war. The Society carried good stocks of flour, and by adopting the fixed policy of regulating the price of bread by the average price of the flour in stock was able to maintain the price at a lower level than the current price of flour warranted. In this way, while it was possible to maintain full stocks of flour, the Bakery was able to keep the price of bread at a halfpenny per 4-lb. loaf below the price at which other bakers wished to sell it, and so saved the people of the North many thousands of pounds.

The difficulties of transport were experienced by the branch, however, in a much more marked degree than by the parent body. All coal, flour, sugar, etc., used in the bakery had to be imported, and as transport costs went up so also did prices, until bread was being sold in Belfast at one shilling for the 4-lb. loaf. So short did the supply of coal become that in 1915 Belfast Corporation was unable to supply the Bakery with coke for firing purposes and a supply had to be sent over from Glasgow. Flour and sugar also became very scarce, but notwithstanding those facts the output of the Bakery continued to increase rapidly until the coming of Government Regulation flour, with its huge proportion of offal and other nastinesses, created a distaste for bread amongst the public. At the outbreak of war the output of the Bakery averaged 766 sacks per week, while by the end of 1916 this had risen to 892 sacks per week, an increase of  $16\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in two and a half years. From then it gradually declined, until at the end of the 63rd quarter of the working life of the branch it was only 683 sacks per week. From that time and during the next six months the trade again increased, so that by the end of the period with which this history deals, although it had not reached the high-water mark of 1916, all the evidence went to show that that point would soon be left behind.

In 1918, with the object of relieving the congestion at M'Neil Street, it was resolved to establish an oatcake baking department at Belfast, and for this purpose several hot-plates were transferred to the Belfast bakery, as well as several girls from the M'Neil Street oatcake factory. This department has since proved a valuable adjunct to the branch, the plant having had to be augmented and the number of bakers employed increased.

Just at the end of the period Belfast became involved in one of the most widespread strikes in the history of the Labour movement, and practically all work except that of bread-baking was brought to a standstill. The electricity workers of the Corporation came out on strike along with the other workmen, but fortunately for the branch it had power-generating plant of its own, and so was able to continue at work. By this means the trade of the branch was materially increased. The fact that the Federation has always been willing to meet the requests of the employees in a reasonable manner has always enabled the branch to maintain its popularity with the Belfast workmen, and so impressed were the executive of the Operative Bakers' Society with the fairness and even liberality of the committee that on one occasion an official letter was sent from the union in which the board of management were thanked for the assistance which their prompt action in agreeing to the request of the union for a shorter working week had been in enabling that concession to be imposed in the baking trade of the city.

When the branch was established in Belfast the distinct understanding on which the U.C.B.S. took action was that as soon as convenient it should be taken over by the local societies, but as the years pass the likelihood of this being done seems to become more remote. As has already been stated, the branch has been of great assistance not only to Belfast Society but also to the majority of other societies in the North. It has fostered the Co-operative spirit and Co-operative idealism. From a weakling which was very much in need of the fostering care of the movement in Scotland Co-operation in Ireland, and especially in the North of Ireland, has grown to be a strong and healthy organisation, with its centre in Belfast and with branches scattered all over Ulster. It is probable that the Irish societies are strong enough now to take over the branch if they were so disposed, but the far-seeing spirits amongst them see that there is other work lying to their hand to which, relieved of the working of the bakery, they can turn their undivided attention.

On the other hand, the proposal, adopted in 1917, that the Federation should proceed, as and when expedient, to plant branches in other centres of Co-operation in Ireland, will in course of time cause the U.C.B.S. in Ireland to cease to be an exclusively North of Ireland concern. It will do much, just as

the other federation in Ireland, the I.A.W.S., is doing much, to weld together into one united movement the whole of the Co-operative societies in the country. It will serve for Ireland, as it and its kindred associations in Scotland and England are serving to-day, as an illustration of the fact that Co-operation is not merely a principle for adoption by a few farmers or a few workmen in a given district, but is also a principle on which these isolated groups can be united into one powerful whole, by becoming an institution where all can meet on a common platform.



## CHAPTER XV.

### A NEW PRESIDENT.

A GREAT DEMONSTRATION—A NEW TYPE OF OVEN—ST MUNGO HALLS—TEAROOMS BURNED DOWN—MR M'CULLOCH RETIRES; MR GERRARD ELECTED PRESIDENT—AN AMALGAMATION PROPOSAL—PURVEY AND CONTRACT DEPARTMENT—THE FIRST MOTOR VAN—A BREAD EXPERIMENT—PROPAGANDA AND PUBLICITY—UNEMPLOYMENT—THE EFFECT ON CO-OPERATION—CO-OPERATION THE REMEDY—SOME BUSINESS ITEMS—THE SOCIETY'S POSITION.

IN tracing the history of the two branches at Clydebank and Belfast we have wandered far ahead of the general development of the Society, and must now retrace our steps to the main road of our story at the point at which we left it. In the period which began with the beginning of the thirty-third year the directors were kept very busy with business which was connected with the development of the two new branches, but the parent institution was not allowed to suffer from neglect. The great demonstration which was held in the summer of 1902 to celebrate the attainment of an average output of 3,000 sacks per week proved a great success. The demonstration was in two parts. In the first place, the employees and their families and friends, to a number which filled three special trains, went picnicing in the morning to Milngavie. In the second place, a gigantic vehicular procession, which included about 100 vehicles and 150 horses, paraded through the city and out the Milngavie Road as far as Canniesburn Toll, returning to M'Neil Street by another route. This procession was headed by a charabanc containing the members of the Society's band, and the gaily decorated lorries and vans attracted much attention as they passed through the streets. All the mottoes displayed in the procession had some reference to Co-operation.

But, while it is good to demonstrate and advertisement has certainly its uses, bread must also be baked, and the object of

a Co-operative society is, or ought to be, to produce the best possible bread at a minimum cost. This was a fact of which there was not much danger that the directors would lose sight, and even if they did the representatives of the societies would very quickly remind them of the lapse. They were about to build a new bakery; and, with the view of testing the efficiency of a type of oven then practically unknown in Scotland, they decided to erect two drawplate ovens at M'Neil Street. The tests seem to have been satisfactory, for in both Clydebank and Belfast branches this type of oven formed the majority of those installed.

#### ST MUNGO HALLS.

Meantime other matters were engaging their attention. When the new stables had been erected on the land purchased at the south corner of South York Street and Govan Street a considerable portion of the ground—more than half indeed—remained unbuilt on, and early in 1902 the educational committee of the Society came forward with the recommendation that in any further building which might be erected a hall which could be used for educational purposes should be included. The committee also were desirous that the Society should have a hall of their own, and later in the same year the architects were instructed to prepare plans for the utilisation of this vacant land which should include halls and accommodation for the headquarters of the purvey department. At the quarterly meeting in March 1903 power was given to proceed with the erection of the buildings. These were to consist of five halls, containing accommodation for from 200 to 1,500 people, with the necessary siderooms, etc., and with ample accommodation for the purvey department. Permission was also given for the erection of three tenements of dwelling-houses, with shops on the ground floor; the total cost to be from £14,000 to £15,000 for the halls and purvey department buildings, and £6,400 for the tenements. Eleven months passed, however, before the building of the halls was begun, and they were not completed until 1906.

Toward the end of 1903 the Paisley Road tearooms were destroyed by fire, and in restoring them the committee decided to add another storey. The landlord agreed to bear a

proportion of the cost, and on the reconstruction being completed they were named the "Wheatsheaf" tearooms.

#### MR M'CULLOCH RETIRES.

For several years the chairman had been desirous of retiring, but had been induced to remain in office until the schemes on which he had set his heart—the erection of Clydebank and Belfast branches—were well on the way. In 1904, however, he definitely decided to end his official connection with the Society. For fifteen years he had acted as president. He was first appointed to the board by his society in June 1888, and had continued to act on the board until his retiral.

Mr Daniel H. Gerrard was elected president in succession to Mr M'Culloch. For a short time he had represented St George Society on the board prior to his election, while the active part which he had taken, as a member of the Scottish Sectional Board, in combating the boycott in the later "nineties" and his position as chairman of St George Society had made him well known to the majority of Scottish Co-operators.

#### AN AMALGAMATION PROPOSAL.

In the autumn of 1903 an interesting proposal was made by the directors of Hamilton Baking Society. This was to the effect that the two societies should become amalgamated. During the following year several meetings took place between representatives of the two societies, but ultimately negotiations were broken off, the members of Hamilton Baking Society having expressed disapproval of the proposal. If the scheme could have been carried through it would have left the Baking Society in the position of being the only federated society producing bread in the West, with the exception of Chapelhall, and might have paved the way for that society to come in also.

#### PURVEY AND CONTRACT DEPARTMENT.

Meantime the work of the purvey department was growing. For the two years 1902 and 1903 the department secured contracts from Glasgow Corporation for the supply of bags of eatables on Children's Day. In the aggregate the bags supplied



numbered 190,000, of a total value of about £1,800, and requiring somewhere about twenty-five tons of flour for their manufacture. When the "Wheatsheaf" tearooms were reopened after the fire an "at home" was held to which the customers were invited. The purvey department was also an offerer on most occasions when purveys on a large scale had to be carried through, often with success. The department was successful in securing the purveying contract for the tearooms in the East-End Exhibition. It was also a successful offerer in 1904 for the supply of bread to Gailles Territorial Camp, and in the following year Jamestown Camp was supplied from Clydebank.

The tearooms continued to give cause for a considerable amount of anxiety on the part of the committee. Sometimes a small profit was made on the working and sometimes a loss resulted, but there never was that increase in trade for which the board thought they had a right to look. With the erection of St Mungo Hall and the transference of the catering headquarters to South York Street the need for Main Street as a depot for the catering department disappeared, but for some time it was carried on as a workmen's tearoom, always without any signs of assured success, however. Finally, in 1904, it was given up altogether. Nor were the London Street halls or the Union rooms much more successful. Several experiments were made at London Street, with the object of making the place more popular. The whole of the three upper flats were taken by the Society, and several trade union and friendly society branches made the rooms their headquarters, but the place was never really popular. An attempt which was made to run the second flat as workmen's dining and tea rooms did not meet with much success, and it seemed as if anything the board could do was not of much use in popularising the place. Nor were the Union rooms much more successful. They just managed to keep going, but they did not become, as had been hoped, a rendezvous for the men and women of the Co-operative movement. Nevertheless the committee did not despair. They always kept on hoping that the tide would turn and renewed the lease time after time, still looking for the Co-operative patronage which never came in sufficient quantity to make the place a success.

## THE FIRST MOTOR VAN.

For practically the whole of the nineteenth century the power-driven road vehicle had to struggle against the bigotry of the people and the interested opposition of the proprietors of other systems of locomotion. Steam-driven road cars and waggons were in use long before Stephenson had designed and completed his first railway, but they met with strong and unreasoning opposition on the part of many people instigated by the owners of post and passenger coaches, who saw in the new method of locomotion a menace to their welfare, and also by other horse owners, who found these steam-driven, noisy vehicles intolerable nuisances which frightened into panic the high-strung horses unfortunate enough to meet them on the roads. This opposition translated itself into Acts of Parliament which imposed heavy taxation on the newer mode of locomotion, and culminated in 1836 in the famous "man with the red flag" provision in the Act of that year, which was the means of clearing practically every "faster than walking pace" power-driven vehicle off the roads. This Act, passed at the instance and in the interests of the railways, had a most detrimental effect on the development of road and also of canal traffic, and left the country completely at the mercy of the railway companies until the "red flag" restriction was practically laughed out of existence in the last decade of the century by the development of petrol-driven motors, and the prohibition was removed in 1896.

After 1896 the development of power-driven vehicles for road traffic made rapid strides, but it was not until some seven years later that the U.C.B.S., on the instigation of the makers, put a bread motor van on the road for a trial. After working for some months, the committee decided to send a note of their experience of its working to the makers, and at the same time to point out some defects which they had discovered. Gradually, however, the new means of delivery superseded the old, until all the Society's long-distance work was done by means of motor vans. For many years, however, the construction of the motor engines placed a serious obstacle in the way of the adoption of motor vans for short journeys or for journeys which entailed frequent stops. The engine, from its nature, requires

that the cylinder should be charged and the charge compressed before ignition can take place. Drivers were therefore faced with the alternatives of putting the engine out of gear and leaving it running—at a considerable expenditure for fuel which gave no return in work done—or of having much laborious cranking for the purpose of charging the cylinder and compressing and igniting the gas, the latter plan, particularly in cold weather, often entailing considerable expenditure of time as well as of energy. Nowadays, however, most up-to-date motor engines have a small electric engine for doing this work.

#### A BREAD EXPERIMENT.

For a long time it had been the wish of the manager and directors of the Baking Society to introduce a natural working day into the bread trade, and they had done their best some years earlier to have the matter taken up by the societies and the public, but without success. Now, in the autumn of 1905, another attempt was made, a squad of bakers beginning work at 9 a.m.; the bread thus baked being delivered on the following morning. A number of the societies in Glasgow and neighbourhood were induced to take up the sale of this bread, with the result that the sales speedily rose; but after a trial which lasted several months the scheme was abandoned, as the directors found that instead of helping the general work of delivery it was proving a hindrance to that work.

This decision of the committee met with a considerable amount of opposition from delegates to the quarterly meeting, but the directors were not in a position to do other than they had done. The real obstacle was to be found in the fact that the public insisted on having new bread, and with a number of the bakers beginning work late in the day for the production of "natural working day" bread, as it had been named, there was not labour enough in the early morning to meet the demand for new bread by ten o'clock. Thus the second attempt of the Baking Society directors to introduce a natural working day into the baking trade came to naught, through no fault of theirs, but because of a public who would insist on having bread steaming from the ovens.



## PROPAGANDA AND PUBLICITY.

During these years the directors continued to adopt every reasonable method of keeping the Federation and its productions before the public. They took advantage of every opportunity offered by exhibitions to show the quality of goods which were produced by the Society; they exhibited also at shows, and were occasionally successful in securing prizes, although the rush conditions under which their bread had to be produced in order to cope with the ever-increasing demands of the societies did not provide the conditions necessary for producing bread of show quality.

At the same time the entertaining of women's guilds, conference associations, and other Co-operative organisations was further developed, and many Co-operators who before had but a very hazy idea of the size and importance of the U.C.B.S. were enlightened as a result of these visits. The cake shows, also, held annually, were excellent propaganda. Here, inside one hall, were to be found specimens of all the productions of the three bakeries; and these productions came latterly to include many novelties which were not to be found in everyday use, as well as the more common specimens of cakes, buns, bread, etc., and a large variety of biscuits. Thus the cake show came to be regarded as the annual exhibition of Bakery productions, which indeed it was, and it was one of the most eagerly anticipated Co-operative functions of the year.

## UNEMPLOYMENT.

Unfortunately, during the years 1904-1905 there was a very severe economic crisis which was the cause of widespread unemployment, and Glasgow and the West suffered severely. Such economic crises had been periodic during the past century, and differed materially from those which occurred in earlier centuries. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century economic crises were really due to actual scarcity of foodstuffs, and people went hungry as much because there was not enough food to go round as because they had no money with which to buy their share of what there was. Thus, in Scotland, until about the close of the Napoleonic wars, the periods of comparative plenty or of scarcity depended largely on the character

of the seasons. While it is true that the common people were always in want, in bad seasons they died of starvation.

With the coming of the industrial era, however, there took place a gradual change. While prices still depended on the seasons, and were moderately or extravagantly high as the seasons were good or bad, there entered into the problem a new factor, and the people became poor and were unable to purchase *because they had produced too much* and there was not an effective market for the goods. As it has been tersely put: "The shoemaker's children went barefoot because their father had produced too many boots; and the tailor's, naked, because he had made too many clothes."

This was a new phenomenon for which history provides no parallel, and it has persisted, ever increasing in intensity, until towards the end of the first decade of the twentieth century as many as 42 per cent. of the breadwinners in a respectable working-class district in the East-End of Glasgow have been found to be unemployed at the same time.

These periods of unemployment seem to be in the form of more or less regularly recurring cycles. There is first a gradually increasing inflation of the volume of trade. New works are started, old works are enlarged, and everywhere there is a boom, until the zenith is reached. Then comes a gradual slackening off. The supply of goods has outstripped the limits of effective demand and sales gradually decline as warehouses become full. The rate of slackening increases; statisticians begin to watch the rapidly ascending unemployment curve, which in itself does not record the full slackening, as many workers are on short time. This increase of unemployment still further weakens the effective demand for goods and still further accelerates the growth of unemployment, with the result that in about another year the unemployment crisis is reached, soup kitchens and relief works open; thousands of hitherto steady workmen become derelicts—and the huge commercial and industrial concerns take advantage of the slackness to squeeze small rivals out of business or to swallow them up, while at the same time improving their own machinery of production.

Another feature of these industrial phenomena is the acceleration of their periodicity. During the decades which marked the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of

the twentieth, the number of years which elapsed between one crisis and the next was becoming smaller and the periods were appreciably shorter than those of the earlier cycles. Fourteen, twelve, or ten years used to be the intervals between crises, but in the last forty years this interval has gradually shortened, until only three years intervened between the end of one crisis and the beginning of the next. This is in strict accordance with what we would expect to find. The means of supplying the effective demand of the people for goods has increased out of all proportion to the increase in that effective demand, with the natural result that the market gets choked full to overflowing in an ever-shortening time. When to this is added the continuous perfecting of processes and equally continuous speeding up of production, we see that under the conditions which obtain it necessarily follows that the periods which must elapse before the markets are choked up with goods must get progressively shorter, while the periods necessary to relieve the glut again grow gradually longer. Thus, we had a crisis in the late "seventies," another in 1888-89; another in 1893, of a milder type; another in 1898; another, very acute, in 1904-05; and another, the worst the industrial world in Britain has known, in 1908-09-10; while evidences were not wanting when war broke out that we were again on the downward sweep of the cycle.

#### THE EFFECT ON CO-OPERATION.

The Co-operative movement in general is profoundly influenced by conditions of unemployment, which is our excuse for what has been written above. The vast majority of Co-operators depend for their incomes on their being employed in ordinary industrial undertakings, and when the machinery of industry breaks down their spending power is affected. Those in fortunate positions can carry on economically for a longer or shorter period on their investments in their societies, but those fortunate individuals constitute but a small proportion of the whole membership. When an unemployment crisis comes it means distress to a large number of Co-operators, for those who have large savings to fall back on are usually in more or less important positions in the concerns by which they are employed and are amongst the last to be dismissed—are, in fact,



rarely out of employment at all. Sales of Co-operative societies go down, while working expenses continue. In this respect, however, the Baking Society has always been the last to suffer, for people continue to buy bread when they have almost ceased to be able to purchase anything else. But there is always during such crises a proportion of Co-operators, varying in different districts, whose incomes are barely sufficient to meet physical needs while they are in constant employment and who are thrown on their beam ends by even a fortnight of unemployment, and the hardship of these crises is that this is the class of people on whom the curse of unemployment falls first and on whom it rests longest.

Fortunately, the milk of human kindness is not quite dried up in Co-operators, and so soon as genuine cases of distress are known steps are taken to ameliorate the condition. In this process of amelioration the Baking Society has always played a big part. We have already seen that during the miners' and engineers' strikes and during periods of distress due to unemployment the Society distributed thousands of pounds worth of bread, and now, during 1904-05, the same policy was pursued.

If one was inclined to moralise much might be said about the mentality of a people who continue content to endure such straits in a country where wealth abounds in superabundance, and also about the mentality of statesmen who could find no remedy for such a constantly recurring cancer of the body politic; but this is hardly the place for that, and all that can be done is to suggest that in a country in which the Co-operative principle was predominant a remedy would be found. The sufferers themselves, and those who act for them, have tried to do something through limitation of output and the shortening of the working day, but in normal times the onward march of production has more than kept pace with such crude attempts to outwit it. The remedies had the fatal defect of attempting to deal with a symptom while leaving the root disease untouched, and the result, necessarily, has been failure.

#### SOME BUSINESS ITEMS.

From the beginning until 1905 the S.C.W.S. had only paid half dividend on flour purchases. The directors had been approached by the Baking Society's board on more than one

occasion to have this practice altered, but without success. However, at the beginning of 1905 the S.C.W.S. directors decided that in future they would pay full dividend on flour on all new contracts. They were again approached by the U.C.B.S. directors, who had a large contract for flour placed with the S.C.W.S. at the moment, to extend the privilege to contracts at present running, but this they were unable to do. The financial standing of the Society was improving with every year that passed, and in 1905 they found that notwithstanding the very large additions which had been made recently to land and buildings the shares and reserves covered all but  $11\frac{1}{2}$  of the total. At the quarterly meeting held in March 1905 it was agreed that the Society take out ten shares in the North Wales Quarries Society, and at a later meeting this number was increased to 100. Unfortunately, this society, which had been formed to provide work for slate miners out of work because of a trade dispute, did not prosper, and after a few years of a precarious life was forced to go into liquidation.

On several occasions the Baking Society placed orders for biscuit cartons in America until they were able to procure such goods at home. One such order, placed in 1905, was for 100,000 cartons. They were also utilising motors to some extent for bread delivery, and, in addition to their first purchase, other two were now bought. In September of this year—1905—another attempt was made to get the C.W.S. to acknowledge the Baking Society's invoices, but again without success. The contention of the C.W.S. directors all the time was that they were quite able to do all the trade in England, and that therefore the U.C.B.S. did not require to go there at all.

The relations of the directors with their employees have always been cordial, and whenever conditions of trade have permitted concessions in a shorter working week and in wages, where these were not regulated by national agreements, were made from time to time. One such concession was made in 1905, when the hours of the girls in the packing flat were reduced from fifty-one to fifty per week without any request from the employees.

From time to time, also, meetings of the board with the heads of the various departments took place, so that the directors might place before them the nature of the complaints,

suggestions, etc., which came from societies, and solicit their co-operation in extending and consolidating the business through the production of first-class goods and speedy distribution. At one meeting of the board, held shortly after the close of Paisley Congress, a special vote of thanks to the manager, purveyor, and heads of departments was recorded for the efficient manner in which all the work of purveying for that huge assembly had been carried out.

During the period under review Messrs Scott (engineer) and Richard (bread-baking manager) had made some improvements on a type of drawplate oven. These alterations were patented in the joint names of the two gentlemen and the Baking Society, and arrangements were made with Messrs Baker & Son, bakery engineers, London, for the manufacture of the oven. Messrs Scott and Richard were also the joint inventors of a divider and moulding machine.

#### THE SOCIETY'S POSITION.

Much important work was done in the three years from 1902 to 1905. Clydebank bakery was erected; Belfast Bakery was commenced, as was St Mungo Halls, and both were nearing completion; three tenements of houses had been erected in Govan Street, with shops on the street level, and these shops were ultimately all occupied by Kinning Park Society. One result of this policy was that the Baking Society ceased to retain the bread damaged in manufacture, and this trade was taken over by Kinning Park Society. Henceforth, until for a short time they retailed the bread they made in Rothesay Bakery, the Society did a wholesale business only. Notwithstanding the opening of Clydebank Bakery, the sales of loaf bread from M'Neil Street were greater than they had been at the beginning of the period, while the turnover in smallbread, oatcakes, and biscuits had all increased considerably, and the total production for the last six months of the period under review was 92,336 sacks for the three bakeries, as compared with 73,821 at the beginning of 1902. During the four years the membership had increased by thirty-four societies, and the value of the sales by £61,092 for six months. The rate of surplus had been fluctuating between 2/ per £ and 1/8 per £, and for one half-year it was 2/2.



Big things were also in prospect. The need for new offices was forcing itself on the attention of the directors ; and, with the prospect of increased trade in front of them, consideration was already being given to the utilisation of their ground at the north-west corner of South York Street, although the time for extensions there had not yet arrived.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.

STEADY PROGRESS—EXTENSIONS—NEW OFFICES—THE QUALITY OF THE BREAD—THE TEAROOMS—ORDERS FROM EGYPT—ORGANISATION—A SPECIAL COMMITTEE—MR ALEXANDER HAMILTON RETIRES—THE SOCIETY JOINS GLASGOW CHAMBER OF COMMERCE—AUSTRIAN CO-OPERATORS VISIT THE BAKERY—ANOTHER UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS—RAILWAYMEN'S CONGRESS ENTERTAINED—BAND SUCCESSES—PROPAGANDA WORK—CLYDEBANK BAKERY SECURES FIRST PRIZE FOR BREAD AT S.C.W.S. BAKING COMPETITION—THE SOCIETY AND ITS EMPLOYEES—COMPULSORY TRADE UNIONISM—A SHORTER WORKING WEEK—THE OLDEST SCOTTISH SOCIETY—THE CO-OPERATIVE INSURANCE SOCIETY.

THE growth of a great organisation may be likened to that of a river. Away up in the mountains where the river takes its rise every stone has weight to turn it aside. It trickles down the hillside with noisy babble, here almost stagnant, there going forward with a rush; ever gathering strength as it is joined by other streams. But by and by it reaches the plain. The strength of its rush down the hillside carries it forward with gradually diminishing pace until finally it subsides into an easy forward motion, placid and smooth, yet deep enough and strong enough to bear on its broad breast the ships of a hundred nations.

So it has been with the U.C.B.S. At first it was like the tiny rivulet, directed hither and thither by the rocks in its path, with its progress seemingly altogether arrested for a time, then going forward again with a rush and gathering impetus as it went. The last great rush may be said to have been taken when it transferred to M'Neil Street. Its progress down to the final placidity of the valley was rapid but gradually diminishing in speed as it reached the level of the plain, so that having traversed the hills of difficulty and gathered to itself tributaries as it flowed onward, it was now settled into a strong but smooth onward flow. Henceforth the difficulties and

dangers were gone ; henceforth also was gone the rapidity of the current of prosperity ; to be replaced by calm, steady progress which swept forward with the irresistible strength of a mighty river. No longer was there doubling of output in a year or two ; no more was it necessary to add extension to extension in order to keep pace with a rapidly growing trade ; yet an increase in turnover which averaged 250 sacks per week in a year and 1,000 sacks a week in four years was made. It was a huge increase ; actually it was larger than any which had gone before it ; yet it was not so impressive as the smaller increases which had preceded, for in relation to the total trade it was much smaller.

#### EXTENSIONS.

It was not that the work of the Society was not going forward as rapidly in the years 1905 to 1910 as it had done in preceding years, for the progress made in those four years was probably greater than ever before ; but that the gradually increasing volume did not call for the same feverish exertion as formerly. In reality the work done during this period was probably the greatest in the history of the Federation until then, and the extensions were also probably the largest. St Mungo Halls were completed ; Belfast Bakery was built and extended ; while Clydebank Bakery was more than doubled in size. Then the new offices of the Society at the Adelphi Street corner of M'Neil Street were also erected, making total additions to the value of the Society's property of something like £40,000. There were other minor alterations and additions also, such as the covering in of Hayfield Street in order to convert it into a garage. Altogether the additions to the productive departments alone were such as allowed an additional turnover of over 1,000 sacks per week.

The new offices were not built before they were required. The old offices had sufficed indifferently well for the needs of the Society when they were built, but the continuous and rapid extension of the business soon made them altogether inadequate, and by the time the new offices were ready for occupation the old ones were absolutely crowded out.

The new offices were built to meet all emergencies, however, and during the eight years in which they have been occupied have proved quite adequate for the growing business needs of



the Society and its ever-increasing staff. Just before building was commenced, lengthy negotiations which had been proceeding between the Society and the Corporation of Glasgow for land between the building line and the river were completed through the purchase by the Corporation of the land for £1,000; the Corporation agreeing, in addition, to make and maintain the street. This was a good bargain for the Society, for they had obtained £700 more for the land than it had cost them; while a good part of that £700 would have been swallowed up in making the new street. The covering in of, first, the stable courtyard and, later, of Hayfield Street was also excellent business, which made for the comfort and convenience of the men and horses, and was well worth the £670 which the two operations cost.

#### THE QUALITY OF THE BREAD.

For a long time little had been heard of complaints about the quality of the bread, but towards the end of 1905 these became so numerous that the committee called a conference of the foremen in the various departments for the purpose of discussing the matter. The case, as put by the committee, was that they were supplying the best materials, that they were paying good wages and giving the best conditions of labour, and that, naturally, they looked for good results. The serious nature of some of the complaints was emphasised by the convener of the productive committee; while Mr Young stated that the last six months had been the worst for ten years, and hoped that a strong effort would be made to maintain the high reputation of the bakery. The runners, in replying, one and all complained of the inferior quality of the flour, especially that which was used in sponging. They also pointed out that the rush to get ready for the morning deliveries was, to a very large extent, responsible for the inferior quality, owing to the limited time allowed for preparing, proving, and firing. A few suggestions were made which it was thought would make for improvement.

#### THE TEAROOMS.

During most of these years the tearooms continued to be the "lame dog" of the Society. Little or no improvement took place, and balance-sheet after balance-sheet showed a loss in working or an infinitesimal profit. The question cropped

up regularly at the quarterly meetings, and countless suggestions for improvement were made. Particularly was this the case with regard to catering for the less wealthy class of the community. A conference with the respective heads of the tearooms took place, with the object of going into the whole question, but it does not seem to have borne much fruit. The suggestions made, as recorded in the minutes, were of a negative character, and nothing was done. Later, Mr Towart, purvey department, was put in charge of London Street and Paisley Road Rooms for a month, with the object of seeing what could be done to improve the position. On the result of Mr Towart's experiment the minutes are silent ; but, from the fact that in less than six months thereafter the Wheatsheaf Rooms were bought over by the manageress, it would seem that it did not give much hope of success for that branch at least.

#### ORDERS FROM EGYPT.

The fame of the U.C.B.S. was by this time extending, with the result that in August of 1907 an order was received from a merchant in Alexandria for 500 barrels of biscuits. This was followed in October of the same year by a similar order. In the beginning of 1908 the Falkirk depot was closed. The coming of motor transport had made it possible to supply direct from M'Neil Street the district which had been supplied from the depot. An alteration in the rules which was made in March 1908 allowed the directors to serve, in future, for two years without coming up for re-election. This rule ensured that when a society had been appointed to send a representative to the board, that society should be represented on the board for at least two years.

#### ORGANISATION.

There has always been more or less controversy amongst bakers as to the respective merits of barm and yeast as an aerating agency for bread, and as the bread at Belfast was baked by the yeast process, while in M'Neil Street barm was used, it was resolved, early in 1907, to have a test in order to find out which ingredient gave the best results. The nature of the test or how it was carried through is not given in the minutes, but it is stated that the Glasgow bread was favoured by the majority of the directors. On the other hand it was the

case that such prizes as were gained at the Agricultural Hall Exhibitions were gained mostly by Belfast bakery ; but this might be due to any of a variety of causes, and not affected at all by the variety of aerating agent used.

In March 1907 a resolution was approved by the quarterly meeting delegates, the purpose of which was the appointment of a sub-committee to inquire into and report regarding the duties and emoluments of the members of committee, and the advisability of adopting fixed rates of remuneration in place of payment per meeting. It was agreed that the special committee consist of seven members, two of whom should be members of the board. Sixteen delegates were nominated, and it was agreed that the names of these be printed on ballot papers, which should be sent out to the societies so that they could record their votes. At the June quarterly meeting the auditors reported on their counting of the votes on these ballot papers, when it was found that the elected nominees were Messrs Cadiz, Kinning Park ; M'Pherson, Cowlairs ; Gamble, Glasgow Eastern ; Smith, St George ; and Pringle, St Rollox. At this meeting, also, the special committee was given additional work, for the delegates refused to adopt the report of the committee with regard to the representation of Irish societies on the directorate, and remitted the subject to the special committee for their consideration.

The special committee reported to the December quarterly meeting, the more important of the recommendations being that the board be divided into three sub-committees—two for M'Neil Street and one for Clydebank, and that the supervision of Belfast be continued on the lines adopted by the board. They recommended, also, that the method of payment per meeting be adhered to, and that payment be continued at the rates in vogue. With respect to the representation of the Irish societies on the board, a deputation of the committee had visited Ireland and had interviewed representatives of societies and others there able to give information, and, as a result, they declared it to be impossible to give the Irish societies representation on the board because of the geographical position of the branch. They recommended, therefore, the appointment of an advisory committee, to be appointed by the Irish societies. These recommendations of the select committee were all approved and given effect to.



Meantime the Society was continuing its policy of doing as much as possible of its work by its own employees, and it now began to add to its work that of completing the building of motor vans, ordering the chassis from the manufacturers and putting on the bodies themselves. Incidentally, it was decided that from the month of July 1907 all the shops west of Govan Town Hall should be supplied in future from Clydebank factory. In September 1907 Mr Alexander Hamilton, who had been a member of the directorate for a number of years, resigned, and was awarded the thanks of the delegates for the services he had rendered to the Society. In furtherance of the methods of the directors, who believed in testing every appliance which was likely to be of use in improving the quality or cheapening the cost of the goods they manufactured, a "Cook" steam hot-plate was installed early in 1908, and was found to work very satisfactorily. At this period the minutes record that the properties and stocks of the Society were insured for £172,000, divided as follows:—M'Neil Street, £83,500; stables and workshops, £14,350; tenements and halls, £31,400; Clydebank, £29,000; Belfast, £10,500.

In 1908 the board recommended that the Society should become a member of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, and this recommendation was unanimously agreed to by the delegates. During this year one of the most notable events was the visit of a deputation of Austrian co-operators, including Dr. Karpeles, who were making a tour of British Co-operative institutions. During one of the days they were in Glasgow the foreign visitors were the guests of the U.C.B.S., and were enthusiastically welcomed. One cannot help wondering whether the welcome would be quite so enthusiastic and unstinted if they were to return to-day. In a speech which he made during his visit to the bakery, Dr. Karpeles pointed out that in a Parliament of 517 representatives they in Austria had 88 Labour representatives, and contrasted this with the thirty or so in the British House of Commons. He also referred to Co-operators as all belonging to one family, and stated that the members of the deputation left Scotland, not only full of gratitude for the reception given them, but full also of new ideas for the spread of Co-operation. That was only ten years ago, but to-day Austria is a dismembered wreck, and International Co-operation has received a setback from which it may take a generation to recover.

## ANOTHER UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS.

Only three years had elapsed since the last unemployment crisis ended, but at the September 1908 quarterly meeting the chairman felt under the necessity of stating that they were in the midst of the worst unemployment crisis of the last thirty years, and voiced 'the sympathy of those present with the sufferers, a sympathy which he had no doubt would take practical form ere the meeting ended. Later in the meeting it was agreed that £100 be subscribed to the Lord Provost's Fund for the unemployed, and, in the course of the discussion of this proposal, it was stated that the Baking Society had already given free bread to the value of £300. It was decided that in order to avoid overlapping the distribution of free bread in Glasgow should cease, but the directors were empowered to deal with applications received from outside Glasgow. The unemployment epidemic continued right through 1909 and well into 1910, and had not quite disappeared in 1911. It was the most serious in its results which had ever been experienced by Britain since it became an industrial nation.

## RAILWAYMEN'S CONGRESS ENTERTAINED.

In October of 1908 the annual Congress of the Amalgamated Society of Railway servants was held in Glasgow, and, on the Monday night of the week in which the Congress was held, the delegates were the guests of the U.C.B.S., the whole suite of the St Mungo Halls being placed at their disposal. The guests were welcomed by Mr Gerrard in name of the Society. He said the railwaymen all over the country were a tower of strength to the Co-operative movement, and in every town which was a railway centre there also they would find a strong, well-managed Co-operative society.

In 1909 the price of flour took an upward tendency, but at the time the movement began the U.C.B.S. were well prepared to meet it as they had a stock of 75,000 sacks in hand ; sufficient to carry them on for four months. Later in that year the directors had a conference with the directors of the Wholesale Society, as they were dissatisfied with the quality of the flour they were getting from Regent mill. The result of the conference was that they agreed to try Chancelot flour for a time.

New trading terms were also arranged with the S.C.W.S. for the sale of biscuits. This year's sales of cakes and other Christmas and New Year goods were considered very satisfactory, 68½ tons of large cakes being sold. During the period of cake distribution what was considered a record run was made by one of the Society's motors; 140 miles being covered in fifteen hours, and goods delivered on the route.

#### THE BAND.

During the years since its formation, the U.C.B.S. silver band had been gradually increasing in efficiency. At first, when it entered competitions, it was only occasionally in the list of prize-winners, and its engagements in the course of a year were not many in number, but as the members gained in knowledge of their instruments and experience as a musical combination, this position gradually bettered, until in 1906 they were winners of three first prizes and several others of lesser value. These successes were followed in the ensuing years by others, so that by the end of the season of 1908 the Iles cup had become their own property, having been won for three successive years, and the prizes were formally presented at a social meeting, which was held on 3rd December of that year. Mr William Miller, who was president of the band, and who had taken a keen interest in its development from the beginning, presided, and stated that the season had been the best on record, as they had had thirty-five engagements during the season. One of the chief aims of the band, he said, was to spread a greater love for brass band music. During the evening Mr Lawson, chairman of the Scottish Central Brass Band Association, presented the prizes which had been won during the season. These included the challenge cup, the Iles cup, and the second-class championship cup. Mr Miller was presented by the bandsmen during the evening with a clock and ornaments in recognition of the services he had rendered to the band during the eleven years it had been in existence. Mr Miller, in returning thanks, hoped that the U.C.B.S. band would be the nucleus of a Co-operative band which would represent the whole movement, and which would be able in time to take its place alongside even the "Besses of the Barns." Unfortunately, Mr Miller's hopes have not yet been realised, and now there are two bands in the movement instead of one.



## PROPAGANDA WORK.

The Society was continuously devising new forms of propaganda, and extending and developing old forms. Much of this propaganda and advertising work was philanthropic in its nature, and took the form of entertaining various Co-operative and other organisations, but some of it was also utilitarian. For instance, it was usually arranged that the heads of the departments, or some of them, should attend the annual exhibitions of bakery productions in London, and frequently specimens of the Society's productions were shown there. Then the annual cake show grew to be the most sought after function of the whole year in the Co-operative movement, and committeemen and Co-operative employees from all over the country came to inspect and select, while the departments of the three bakeries vied with each other in devising new dainties with which to please the eye and tempt the palate of Co-operators. Unfortunately, amongst other evils which the war brought in its train was the cessation of this annual Co-operative show.

In another direction, also, the propaganda work of the Society was utilitarian as well as philanthropic. A considerable sum was spent every year on educational work, and much of this money was devoted to the promotion of education and recreation amongst the employees. Then, too, when new instruments became necessary for the band, a grant of £200 was made from the Society's funds, while uniforms were also provided. Every opportunity of exhibiting the Society's productions was also seized with avidity, and at the 1906 Congress sufficient space was secured to enable an oatcake baking plant to be set up, thus advertising still further the Society's products amongst the Co-operators of the South. In 1907 a conference was held with representatives of society members and their employees for the purpose of stimulating the pastry trade. Toward the end of the same year, a society in Amsterdam was granted the use of lantern slides of the bakery for propaganda purposes. Twenty vehicles were sent out to take part in the Co-operative demonstration held in connection with the Co-operative Festival in the beginning of 1908, while every year for a time an inspection of the Society's horses took place in Glasgow Green on an evening in the summer,

and prizes were given to the employees for the best groomed horses and best kept and cleaned harness. During a bakers' strike at Lanark in the early autumn of 1908, the Bakers' Union applied to the Baking Society for bread, which they purposed to sell in opposition to the local bakers. This request was complied with on the condition that the Union did not sell in competition with the local society.

Late in 1908, the bakery of Kilbirnie Society was burned down, and that society was supplied with bread until their own bakery was reconstructed again. At an exhibition and test of motor vehicles, which took place towards the end of 1908, an Albion car which was the property of the Society was awarded first prize and a Halley car, also their property, second prize. The prizes, £4 and £2, were given to the drivers. Pieheaters had been supplied to one society in the Glasgow area by the Baking Society, and these having been found exceedingly useful in stimulating the sales of this variety of the Society's productions, it was agreed by the directors that any other society which was desirous of using them should have similar facilities. Toward the end of 1909 it was agreed to hold a competition amongst the squads of bread bakers in M'Neil Street and Clydebank, and to enter bread baked by the winners for the S.C.W.S. bread baking competition. Clydebank branch secured first prize at the bread baking competition of the S.C.W.S., and the championship shield was presented to the U.C.B.S. at a social meeting of the Bakery employees, which was held at Clydebank shortly afterwards. The M'Neil Street squad foremen who had won prizes also had these presented to them at a social meeting which was held in Glasgow about the same time. Hopes were expressed at the meeting in Clydebank that, having gained the shield, Clydebank would remain possessors of it, but this was probably too much to expect. At all events, no society succeeded in winning it twice while the competition was in being.

In 1910 the miners of Leadhills, who had since become more closely associated with the U.C.B.S., were on strike against the very bad conditions of their employment, and £20 was granted by the Bakery to the strike funds. In March 1910 "Puffing Billy," the first steam motor owned by the U.C.B.S., was disposed of for £70, after having given some eight years of faithful service.

## THE SOCIETY AND ITS EMPLOYEES.

The good terms which existed between the Society and its employees continued during the period with which we are dealing. In great measure this was due to the kindly consideration with which they were treated by the directors and managers generally. In addition to the bonus—and the facilities given, not only to invest it in the Society's funds through the investment society, and the opportunities which that society's membership of the Federation gave for bringing grievances before the general body of the members—facilities, by the way, which during the long history of the Society have never had to be used—the directors were continuously thinking out plans for interesting the employees in their work, and as opportunity offered were bettering the conditions under which work was carried on. It is scarcely possible to conceive conditions under which the work of bread bakers will be other than laborious, but the strong efforts made by the directors to inaugurate a natural working day for the bakers—efforts which failed because the general body of the public were more concerned about suiting their own convenience than they were about making a baker's working life more bearable—showed that the directors had the interests of their employees at heart and desired to make working conditions as tolerable as possible.

With many of the representatives of the societies this idea was also foremost, and doubtless it was because that they recognised that trade unionism was the surest safeguard of the welfare of the employees that, in 1907, they adopted a resolution which made it imperative that where there were trade unions with which it was possible for the employees to become associated they must be members of these unions. Another step which was taken by the directors spontaneously had for its object the wellbeing of the workers. This was the inauguration in September 1907 of a 44-hour week for the oatcake bakers. In later years the number of hours worked by the female employees in all departments was also gradually reduced.

The Society also bore a share of the expenses of the employees' picnics and social meetings, usually contributing a sum sufficient to clear all or almost all the expenses of the juniors. In 1909 the top flat of the biscuit warehouse was fitted



up as an employees' dining room. In the middle of 1910 the board were called on to arbitrate in a case where three of the blacksmiths employed by the Society had failed to maintain themselves in membership of their trade union and had been dismissed by the manager as a result. After considering the case, the directors upheld the decision of the manager.

#### THE OLDEST SCOTTISH SOCIETY GOES UNDER.

Until the year 1908 the oldest Co-operative society in Scotland and probably in the world was located in Govan. Govan Old Victualling Society kept painted over its doors while in business the statement : "established 1777." Doubtless, this statement was legendary and would be difficult to prove, but it is certainly worthy of acceptance in view of the fact that other Scottish societies are known to have existed at a very early date. However, the society had fallen on evil days, and in the beginning of 1907 sent a request to the directors of the U.C.B.S. that its shares should be placed on the transfer list. Towards the end of 1908 it was forced to go into liquidation, but an unsuccessful attempt was made to carry on the business, in order that the deficit of some £900 which the accounts showed might be cleared off. Thus the last remaining link with the Co-operators of the eighteenth century disappeared, after what was doubtless a very useful career of one hundred and thirty years.

#### THE CO-OPERATIVE INSURANCE SOCIETY.

For many years after the formation of the Co-operative Insurance Society the Baking Society had held aloof from it and refused to become a member, but in later years more Co-operative councils prevailed, and it had become affiliated. On the death of Mr Andrew Miller, secretary of the S.C.W.S., who had been for many years a Scottish representative on the C.I.S. board, Mr James H. Forsyth, cashier of the Baking Society, was nominated and secured election, retaining his office until the taking over of the C.I.S. by the two Wholesale societies.

#### THE SOCIETY'S PROGRESS.

Notwithstanding the difficulties which the depression of 1908-09-10 had placed in the way of increased trade for the Society the progress made was substantial, and the yearly

## DEPARTMENTAL MANAGERS



1. WILLIAM MILLER,  
Distributive Manager, Glasgow.

2. JOHN DAVIDSON,  
Master of Works, Glasgow.

3. JOHN M'PHAIL,  
Delivery Manager, Glasgow.

4. JOHN TOWART,  
Purveying Manager, Glasgow.

5. WILLIAM NINIAN,  
Biscuit Production Manager, Glasgow.

6. MURDOCH RICHARD,  
Bread and Pastry Production Manager, Glasgow.

## DEPARTMENTAL MANAGERS



1. JOHN REID,  
Productive Manager, Clydebank.

2. ALLAN STEWART,  
Distributive Manager, Clydebank.

3. MALCOLM M'FARLANE,  
Delivery Manager, Clydebank

4. DUNCAN M'INNES,  
Branch Manager, Belfast.

5. WILLIAM BELL,  
Productive Manager, Belfast.

6. DUNCAN GRAHAM,  
Branch Cashier, Belfast.



turnover, which was £480,000 at the beginning of 1906, had risen by the end of 1910 to £564,000, while the membership had increased from 143 to 171. At the beginning of the period the weekly turnover in sacks averaged 3,405, while by the end of the period it was 3,795. This was a much smaller increase than in the preceding period, and it was also a decrease of 125 sacks from the trade which was being done in 1907-08, but in view of the labour conditions which prevailed in Glasgow during the later years of the period it was very good indeed, representing as it did an increase in turnover of 10,000 sacks a year.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### PROGRESS CONTINUES STEADY.

BISCUIT FACTORY REMODELLED—COVER-PLATE OVENS—COMPLETION OF M'NEIL STREET BAKERY—A SERIOUS FIRE—A NEW VENTURE—SUCCESSFUL CONTRACTORS—BLEACHED FLOUR—A BREAD TEST—ADVERTISING WORK—FRESH OVERTURES TO C.W.S.—A TESTING DEPARTMENT CONSIDERED—PROPOSED SUPERANNUATION FUND—THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESS—THE HOLIDAY CAMP—THE SOCIETY'S PROGRESS.

THE new offices of the Society were ready to be occupied in 1910, and in March of that year they were formally opened. In the course of the same year, the remodelling and bringing thoroughly up to date of the biscuit factory was commenced. This remodelling scheme had its origin in the fact that the old engine which provided the power for the biscuit-making machinery was wearing done; and after considering the whole position the members of the board decided that the interests of the business would be best served by transferring from steam to electricity as a motive power. It was therefore agreed that henceforth each machine in the factory should be motor driven. The cost of installing twelve motors and controllers was over £500; but it made for ease in working and also in controlling the machinery.

#### COVER-PLATE OVENS.

About the same time a new type of bread-baking oven was installed. The ovens in the older part of the bakery were becoming worn out, and that section of the bakery also required remodelling in order to bring it into line with the newer ideas of the twentieth century. But the ovens in the old bakery had been built on the Scotch principle, and there was not sufficient space available to permit of draw-plate ovens being installed without a reconstruction of the premises which might have proved more costly than the provision of an entirely new building. Just at this time they had submitted to them for their consideration

a new type of oven which seemed specially designed to meet cases of reconstruction like theirs. This type of oven, which has come to be known as the "cover-plate oven," had much the same features, so far as the actual baking was concerned, as had the draw-plate oven, but it differed from the latter in that, instead of requiring a large space in front of the oven to permit of the oven sole being drawn out to receive the bread before baking and to permit of its removal afterwards, it had a moveable cover, which was raised to permit of the bread being placed on and removed from the oven sole, and which was lowered to retain the heat when the unbaked bread had all been deposited on the sole. The first of these ovens was installed about the end of 1910, and so satisfactory did the trial prove that first No. 5 bakehouse and then No. 11 bakehouse were entirely remodelled and ovens of this new type installed. Before deciding finally on the adoption of the new type of oven, however, numerous experiments and tests were carried through. The Bakery engineer (Mr Scott), the chief foreman baker (Mr Richard), and the master of works (Mr Davidson) were all requested to submit reports. These reports were eminently satisfactory, particularly that of Mr Richard, who reported on the saving in fuel and wages which was effected by the new oven.

At the time when the directors decided to install the first set of six of the new pattern ovens, they also decided to install one complete set of automatic baking machinery, manufactured by the same firm of baking machinery manufacturers, the estimated cost of six ovens and machinery being £4,000. This automatic machinery has proved so effective in the various processes of dough making and bread moulding that less than half the number of bakers are required to perform the work where it is installed as are required where it is absent. As indicated above, so effective did the combination of new ovens and new plant prove that in little more than a year after the first £4,000 had been spent on the installation it was decided to extend it at an additional cost of £7,000. Since then, additions have been made which bring the total number of this type of oven to twenty.

At the same time as this improvement in their baking plant was decided on, the committee also decided on extensive



alterations in connection with the oatcake factory. These included the removal of the hot-plates from their former situation to the flat immediately above the biscuit factory, at a cost, including structural alterations, of over £2,000.

#### COMPLETION OF M'NEIL STREET BAKERY.

No sooner were these alterations carried through successfully than the committee turned their attention seriously to another project which had been receiving consideration at intervals for some time. This was the completion of the Govan Street, M'Neil Street, Adelphi Street, South York Street square by the erection of an entirely new block on the site of the old buildings at the South York Street and Adelphi Street corner—the north-west corner of the square; and at the quarterly meeting held on 20th September 1913 they were granted powers to proceed. The plans for the new building provided for a workers' dining room in the basement flat. The ground floor was to form an extension of the biscuit factory, which had become congested in recent years and was too small to enable the Society to meet the demand for biscuits. The first floor was to be used as an icing room, and the icing room then in use it was proposed to utilise as a cake factory, building four Scotch ovens for that purpose. The second flat was to be utilised as an extension of the biscuit-packing warehouse; while the upper flat it was decided to fit up as a dressing room for the female workers. The approximate cost was given as £11,000.

The new building was commenced in the spring of 1914, but before much had been done the outbreak of war began to hamper building operations very seriously, and it was not until the summer of 1916 that the building was completed.

#### A SERIOUS FIRE.

In November 1913 a fire occurred in the top flat of the stables at South York Street. In this flat 180 tons of hay were stored, and before the fire could be subdued the whole of the hay was destroyed and the roof had fallen in. Fortunately, the damage was covered by insurance, and the sum of £543 was received from the insurance company. It was exceedingly fortunate that the fire originated in the upper flat, as otherwise many valuable horses might have been destroyed.

## A NEW VENTURE.

For the Christmas trade of 1910 a new branch of trade was started. During the preceding two winters unemployment had been rife, and as a result the trade done in Christmas goods had shown a tendency to fall off, but by the end of 1910 business was getting back to normal again, and in order that Co-operators might be able to take full advantage of the facilities for the production of Christmas luxuries which the Baking Society possessed, a range of Christmas hampers, containing seasonable goods produced by both U.C.B.S. and S.C.W.S., was placed on the market. To popularise these hampers amongst the members of the various societies, contribution cards, enabling the societies to form "hamper clubs," were distributed. This branch of business proved instantly successful, over 3,000 hampers being sold. Altogether, at the cake show this year, 102 tons of cakes were disposed of, as well as shortbread to the value of almost £2,000.

The Society was now almost continuously successful in their tenders for contracts on a large scale. On several occasions they had supplied the provisions for the children entertained during the summer months in the public parks by Glasgow Corporation, and during this winter they were the successful tenderers for the supplying of five centres for the feeding of necessitous children; while in 1911 they obtained the Corporation contract to cater for 67,500 children at the Exhibition of that year, as well as the contracts for the Coronation dinners in St Mungo Hall and Maryhill. The year 1911 must also have been a busy year for weddings, for it is recorded in the minute of 7th July meeting that already that year 208 bridecakes had been made at M'Neil Street. Tenders for supplying a number of industrial schools were also accepted, and the contracts for supplying a number of military camps with bread were received. In the following year the contracts for supplying bread to a number of the Territorial camps in Scotland were also secured, and these contracts continued to be held by the Society until the outbreak of war. In the autumn of 1912 a certificate was received from the War Office for prompt and regular delivery of bread to the camps; and this promptness and regularity of delivery had doubtless much to do with the fact that for so many

years in succession the contracts for supplying these camps were held by the Society.

For the Christmas trade of 1912 136 tons of cakes were sold, while 80,000 children were supplied on Glasgow Corporation Children's Day.

#### BLEACHED FLOUR.

The validity of the bleaching of flour by chemical process was a question which engaged the attention of many official Co-operators during the spring and summer of 1912. Uddingston Society was prosecuted for a contravention of the Food and Drugs Acts because they had sold to a Food and Drugs inspector one pound of flour which had been bleached or oxidised by artificial means. The case was defended by the S.C.W.S., from whom the flour had been purchased, and at whose Regent mills it had been milled. Almost all the chemical and milling experts in the country gave evidence as witnesses on one side or the other, and the Sheriff before whom the case was heard was left with a mass of opposing technical evidence to unravel such as he had seldom had to face. Ultimately he found the case not proven and, contrary to expectation, the decision was not appealed from. The U.C.B.S., like most of the other Co-operative societies in Scotland, had been using a proportion of this chemically whitened flour, but in November of 1911, shortly after the seizure of the sample at Uddingston, they decided to write to the S.C.W.S. and inform them that no further deliveries of bleached flour could be accepted. Nothing further was heard of the controversy which had raged so fiercely in Hamilton Sheriff Court, however, and so it may be taken for granted that, whatever virtues or failings flour so treated may have had, injury to health could not be proved.

#### A BREAD TEST.

Although the committee of the Baking Society and their experts took every precaution and themselves made every test possible, so as to ensure that only products of the highest quality were sent out from the bakery, they did not always rest content with having done that, and one of the occasions when they took steps to get the unbiassed opinions of the customer societies arose shortly after the introduction of the cover-plate ovens into the bakery. They sent out samples of the bread produced by



Scotch, draw-plate, and cover-plate ovens to every society customer, with a request that the societies should test the three different loaves and indicate their preference. Altogether 634 samples were sent out and 439 replies were received. Of these 47 per cent. favoured the bread baked in the cover-plate oven, 34 per cent. favoured the draw-plate bread, and 19 per cent. the bread baked in the Scotch oven. At the same time fourteen samples had been sent to a private firm at the request of the firm, and the results there were somewhat similar. This test seemed to establish the superiority of the cover-plate oven over either of the other two forms.

#### ADVERTISING WORK.

When preparations were being made for the 1911 Glasgow Exhibition, the Baking Society's committee decided to approach the boards of the S.C.W.S. and the P.C.M.S., with the object of having a joint Co-operative stand. Later, a sub-committee of the S.C.W.S. was interviewed, and an agreement was reached that a portion of the space reserved for that federation should be placed at the disposal of the Baking Society for the purpose of erecting a working exhibit. On interviewing the manager of the Exhibition, however, it was found that that gentleman would not sanction a working exhibit in that section of the Exhibition, with the result that the Baking Society's committee decided to drop the proposal and thanked the S.C.W.S. for their kindness. Meantime, however, advantage was taken of the exhibition of Co-operative productions which was got up by the S.C.W.S. in connection with the jubilee celebrations of St Rollox Society, and there an exhibit which took the form of oatcake baking by a number of alert and smartly dressed girls, together with showcases filled with a tempting collection of the most toothsome dainties produced by the Society, was shown. At the same time, a similar exhibit was shown at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Meantime, the engineering department of the Society undertook a very important piece of work. This was the making of several "Unitas" moulding machines for use in the bakery. The making of these machines was placed in the hands of a Scottish firm on what were deemed satisfactory terms.

About this time Enniskillen Society in Ireland was having a bad time of it because of the unfair competition of the master

bakers of the town, and assistance in the form of an increased percentage on bread was given by the Belfast Branch. The directors also lodged a protest with the Irish Master Bakers' Association. In the early weeks of 1911, the Society carried out a test at Clydebank for the purpose of ascertaining the comparative costs of gas and electricity for lighting purposes. This test showed that the Society would save 9/ per week by using electricity.

#### FRESH OVERTURES TO C.W.S.

At the beginning of 1911, a deputation from the board was visiting Newcastle on business, and it was decided that advantage should be taken of the opportunity to interview the Newcastle section of the C.W.S. board again, with the object of having U.C.B.S. invoices to English societies recognised by that federation. The interview was of a most friendly nature, and the members of the Newcastle section of the board promised to bring the suggestions made before the full board of the C.W.S., and give them full consideration and an early decision. This was done, but, unfortunately, with the same result as on previous occasions; the C.W.S. refused to recognise U.C.B.S. invoices.

An interesting sidelight on the enormous trade done by the Federation in pastries, teabread, cakes, etc., is given in a report which was prepared by the Federation at the instance of the Co-operative Union. The Union was collecting information with the object of having the tax on sugar repealed or reduced, and the information supplied by the U.C.B.S. showed that the amount of sugar consumed by that Federation in its various products during the past year had been 837 tons; while the taxation which had been paid on this article was £1,500.

Various items of business were engaging attention, all of which had a bearing on the success of the Society. The Continental Tyre Company offered a prize of 5/ to the vanmen for every tyre of theirs which was run more than the guaranteed 10,000 miles, and the directors agreed to accept this; as not only was it good for the tyre manufacturers, but it also made for the saving of outlay on tyres. A test of flour for shrinkage was carried out for thirty-three days, with the result that it was decided to call the attention of the S.C.W.S. to the excessive shrinkage shown. This was explained later as being due to the

great demand for flour, which necessitated its being sent out from the mill too soon after being milled, and an amicable settlement was reached. In November 1911, it was agreed to insure the members of the board against accident when engaged on the business of the Society. The only surprising thing about this step is that it had not been taken before.

#### TESTING DEPARTMENT. CONSIDERED.

In November 1911, a special report by Mr Murdoch, principal of the Baking Section of the Glasgow Technical College, was received, the subject of which was the standardisation of flour, so far as proportions of moisture and gluten contained were concerned. Mr Murdoch suggested that the flour should be tested at the beginning of the season and a standard of moisture for each brand fixed; he also suggested that baking tests should be made with the object of comparing the relative values of the various brands. After this report had been considered for some time by the members of committee, it was again discussed, but decision was delayed, and it was not until May 1913 that mention of it again appeared in the minutes. It was then decided that a chemical analysis of the various ingredients in a laboratory was not necessary, but it was thought that an experienced baker might be engaged who would devote his time to making experiments with the various brands of flour, checking costs and testing new recipes; and the whole question was remitted to the productive committee to make further arrangements. The coming of the war put a stop to definite steps being taken, however, and it was not until the end of the fiftieth year of the Society's history that it was finally decided to establish a testing department. For this purpose, the services of Mr Murdoch, the Technical College expert, were secured for the exclusive use of the U.C.B.S.

#### PROPOSED SUPERANNUATION FUND.

By a coincidence it came about that the two big federations in the Scottish Co-operative movement were called upon to consider the question of the superannuation of their employees about the same time. It was in the month of August 1912 that the question was raised in the U.C.B.S. boardroom. Mr Miller, the Shettleston representative on the board, who had given



notice some time earlier, moved at the committee meeting held on 2nd August "That we consider the possibility of forming a compulsory contributory superannuation fund for all employees, with a compulsory retiral at sixty-five years of age." This motion, which was seconded by Mr M'Lean, was agreed to, and it was remitted to the finance committee, manager, and cashier to prepare a scheme for submission to the board.

It is difficult to say whether the two things had any relation, but at anyrate it is remarkable that at the quarterly meeting of the S.C.W.S. which took place in September of the same year a motion for the appointment of a committee to consider the superannuation of directors and employees and to prepare a scheme was given notice of by Kinning Park Society.

At the quarterly meeting of the Baking Society which was held in June 1913 a draft scheme was submitted by the directors for the consideration and provisional approval of the delegates, the chairman stating that if this was done the scheme would be submitted to an actuary for his report on the financial proposals.

Delay was moved on behalf of Kinning Park Society, in order that the societies should have an opportunity of submitting amendments. On the other hand, those who favoured giving the board the provisional approval they asked for argued that the proper time to submit amendments was after the actuary had considered the financial proposals and had come to a decision as to their soundness or otherwise. Disapproval of the whole proposal was also moved, but eventually the motion for delay became the finding of the meeting.

The proposals of the committee were most elaborate. They proposed that all employees who had been in regular employment by the Society for six months and who were in the employment of the Society at the date of commencing the fund, if they were sixteen years of age or upwards and not over fifty years of age in the case of males or forty-five years of age in the case of females, should be members of the fund. The proposed scale of contributions to the scheme was 5 per cent. of the wages or salary received, and contributors were to be eligible at sixty years of age to retire on pension if they so desired. At the age of sixty-five for males and fifty for females they would be eligible to receive annuities ranging from 25 per cent. of their

salaries, after ten years' payment of contributions, to 85 per cent. of their salaries after having paid contributions for fifty-one years. To assist in launching the scheme it was proposed that the Society should make an initial contribution of £10,000. It was also proposed that the superannuation fund should be managed by a committee of seven, which committee should consist of the chairman and three directors for the time being of the U.C.B.S. and three representatives of the employees, who must have at least three years' service with the Society.

When the scheme was brought forward again at the September meeting of the Society one of the amendments sent in was from St George Society, and called for the rejection of the scheme in its entirety. The motion to reject the scheme was seconded by a representative of the employees, who referred to the "autocratic" methods of the directors in adopting this scheme and bringing it forward without consulting the workers. The result was that the scheme was disapproved. The scheme which was brought forward by the S.C.W.S. for the superannuation of their employees suffered the same fate.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESS.

It was as the result of an invitation which came from the Scottish National Co-operative Conference, held in Kilmarnock in 1910, that the International Co-operative Congress held in Hamburg in the autumn of that year decided to come to Glasgow for the 1913 Congress rather than go to Vienna, the claims of which city were strongly urged by Dr. Beno Karpeles, in opposition to the claims of Glasgow, as set forth by Mr James Deans.

The year 1913 was a big year for Scottish Co-operators, for not only had they to entertain the International Congress in the autumn, but Scotland was also the location of the British Congress in the summer, and pessimists were not wanting who thought that the Co-operators of Scotland had undertaken a task which was too heavy for them when they decided to entertain two so great Congresses as the British and the International in one year. Events proved that the pessimists were wrong, however. One of the first duties which fell to the lot of the committee which was appointed to make preparations for the International Congress was that of finding a suitable house for

it, but they did not require to look far afield. The U.C.B.S. were the owners of the best hall in the city for the purpose for which it was required. In St Mungo Hall there was ample accommodation for the Congress itself, while in the adjoining halls ample space for dining the delegates could be provided. The Bakery was just across the street, and cooking and waiting facilities were all that could be desired. So it was decided that in St Mungo Hall the Congress should be held.

The U.C.B.S. undertook all the work of catering for the delegates at luncheon each day. They also undertook the provision of the luncheon which was given by the reception committee on the Saturday, and they themselves provided the entertainment for one of the afternoons of Congress. It was universally acknowledged that the International Congress of 1913 was the best International Co-operative Congress held, and to this happy result the U.C.B.S. contributed no small share. The event was one which will not readily be forgotten by those privileged to take part. Alas, that the expressions of fraternity so freely uttered then should have been so soon made of no avail by the outbreak of war.

#### THE HOLIDAY CAMP.

It is to Mr John Dewar, for many years president of the Renfrewshire Co-operative Conference Association, that the idea of a Co-operative holiday camp owes its origin. For many years Mr Dewar was an enthusiastic Volunteer, and his experiences under canvas during the annual training periods of his regiment impressed him with the value of this form of holiday. Associated with him in his propaganda for a camping association on Co-operative lines was Mr James Lucas, at that time president of the Glasgow and Suburbs Conference Association, and latterly, also, Mr John Paton, of the Renfrewshire Conference council, who had been converted to the idea as the result of a visit to Douglas, I.O.M., where he had seen the huge city under canvas which for a number of years housed thousands of holiday-making Lancashire lads every summer.

By 1910 these gentlemen had been able to get their organisation so far advanced that they had selected a site on the Ayrshire Coast for their first camp, and had made



arrangements with the farmer who rented the land. At the last moment, however, the landowner stepped in and vetoed the whole proceedings. This put an end to doing anything further with regard to a camp during that year, but the search for a suitable site continued and, at length, the little farm of Roseland, situated on Canada Hill, Rothesay, overlooking the Bay, was secured. The farm was for sale, but the committee in charge of the arrangements considered that purchase was too bold an initial step to take, so they leased the farm for six months ; securing an option to purchase at the end of that period if they wished.

Here, in the summer of 1911, the first Scottish Co-operative holiday camp was established. It was rather a primitive affair, that first camp. The cooking was done in the little farmhouse, while the campers had their meals in a large marquee. The U.C.B.S. directors took a keen interest in the camp from the very beginning. The catering was done by them, and the catering staff were housed in the little farmhouse.

Primitive though the arrangements were, they appealed to the campers, who were unanimous in their praise of the beautiful situation, the pure air, the perfect catering, and the small outlay for which they secured a perfect holiday. Thus encouraged, the committee which had promoted the camp proceeded to organise a Co-operative society to work it, and in this Co-operative society the U.C.B.S. took out twenty-five shares. The farm was purchased for £600, and in September the Baking Society increased the number of their shares to 100.

In 1912 the camp was much better organised than in 1911, but it was still far from being what its promoters desired to see it. They were hampered for lack of funds, however, as the Co-operative societies were showing caution and a lack of faith in the enterprise, and were not providing the capital necessary to work it properly as readily as had been expected. The only fault which the committee found with the site lay in the fact that in dry summers the water supply was inadequate. The summer of 1912 also showed them that it was desirable that something more impervious to rain than a marquee was desirable for the gatherings of campers and, in order that these two defects might be put right, they applied to the U.C.B.S. for a

loan of £1,000 on the security of the property. This loan was granted them, and so good use did they make of the power which it gave them that, before the time came for opening the camp in 1913, they had put down a huge storage tank for water, capable of storing 20,000 gallons; and had erected a dining hall large enough to dine several hundred persons.

The camp was a very great success in the third year. Its popularity was so great that the committee found it quite impossible to provide accommodation for all who wished to avail themselves of its facilities for holiday making, and this has been the case in each succeeding year, notwithstanding the influence of the war. At the end of the third season, however, the committee of the association came to the conclusion that, if the camp was to be made the success they believed it was capable of becoming, some rearrangement of its management would require to be made, so they invited the Baking Society to take it over as a going concern and work it themselves.

They explained to the directors of the Baking Society that they were not taking this step because they disbelieved in its success, but solely on the ground that they considered that dual control was not good for discipline and did not make for good management.

The directors of the Baking Society promised to consider the matter, and the result was they brought forward to the quarterly meeting, held in March 1914, a recommendation that the camp should be taken over, and this recommendation was accepted by the delegates. Since then the camp has been managed by the U.C.B.S.

In 1914 accommodation was provided for 250 persons, and it is extremely probable that greatly increased accommodation would have been provided before now had it not been for the intervention of the war which, by providing another and much more strenuous form of camping for the past and prospective frequenters of Canada Hill, prevented for the time being such further developments. Doubtless, however, with the return of Europe to sanity, such developments will take place; until, before many years are past, almost the whole of the Society's seven-acre estate will be covered in the summer and autumn months with the picturesque pyramids of white canvas.

## THE SOCIETY'S PROGRESS.

In all its branches, with the exception of the tearooms, the progress of the Society during these four years had been remarkable. In 1913, however, the London Street tearoom was closed, and as soon as the lease of the Union Halls expired they also were given up. At the beginning of the period the output had averaged 3,820 sacks per week, while at its end the average output was 4,648, an increase of 848 sacks per week in four years. The aggregate sales for the year which ended in July 1914 were £692,600. Truly, the Society had travelled far from the days when a small two-oven bakehouse sufficed for all its output. The membership now consisted of 201 societies; which was also a contrast to the eight small struggling societies which had banded themselves together in the last days of December 1868 to form the Federation.

The time had now arrived when the Federation was to be put to a more severe test than ever before since it had attained to years of maturity. Like a thunderclap the war storm which had been gathering over Europe during the month of July burst on an astonished world which had almost come to believe war on such a gigantic scale impossible, and many were the doubts expressed, even by sincere wellwishers of the Co-operative movement, as to how it would weather the storm. The next chapter will tell how one federation kept the Co-operative flag flying and added to the laurels it had gained by its devoted and loyal service to the interests of the common people.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### BAKING UNDER WAR CONDITIONS.

THE EARLY DAYS OF WAR—KEEPING DOWN PRICES: THE DIRECTORS' VIEW—HALF-PAY TO SOLDIER EMPLOYEES—ARMY CONTRACTS—HORSES AND MOTORS COMMANDEERED—PRICE OF BREAD ADVANCED—DEATH OF BISCUIT FACTORY MANAGER—MORE ARMY CONTRACTS—EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS—M'NEIL STREET BLOCK COMPLETED—BUSINESS ORGANISATION—TEABREAD AND PASTRY SHOPS—THE PRICE OF BREAD—INCREASING OUTPUT—BISCUIT AND TEABREAD TRADE—THE SOCIETY AND ITS WORKERS—DELIVERY DIFFICULTIES—DEATH OF MR DUNCAN M'CULLOCH.

ON the fourth day of August 1914, Great Britain entered on a new era. There are not awanting cynics who declare that Great Britain is hardly ever out of war, but however that may be, there never has been in the world's history a war which seemed in its early days to be fraught with so dire consequences for civilisation as did that into which the nations of Europe plunged in those early days of August 1914. For the first few days it seemed as if chaos had suddenly developed. The people seemed to go mad with panic, and rushed to purchase goods wherever these could be procured, careless of the prices which they were called on to pay. To the traders, large and small, it must have seemed like the beginning of a trading millennium, and they took immediate advantage of the position in which they found themselves. Prices doubled, trebled, and quadrupled; yet the eager rush to buy continued. The poor bought what they could, but they soon reached the end of their meagre resources. Not so the rich, however. Amongst them, the panic seemed to be even greater than amongst the poorer sections of the community, and they provisioned their houses as if for a siege, careless as to who must want if only they had plenty in store.

The bakers of Glasgow were also the victims of the profiteering craze which had suddenly enmeshed the trading public, and at a meeting which took place on the afternoon of 3rd August,



EDUCATIONAL DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND



EDUCATIONAL DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND



they proposed that the price of bread should be raised. Mr James Young, manager of the U.C.B.S., had been present at this meeting and had opposed the proposal, with the result that it was not carried out. This action of his was homologated by his board at a special meeting which was held the same evening, while at another meeting, held three days later, the committee decided that they would not raise the price of bread in the meantime. The Baking Society found itself in a very favourable position at this time. In M'Neil Street there were supplies of flour which would keep the bakery going for nine weeks, while Clydebank had supplies for six, and Belfast for seven weeks. They were thus in a position to view the situation with more or less equanimity. The S.C.W.S. were also in a good position so far as supplies of flour and wheat were concerned, having some nine or ten weeks' supplies either on hand or on board ship at the outbreak of war, and the rapidity with which the German fleet was bottled up within its own harbours gave security of passage for the time being to food-carrying vessels. Nevertheless, the general panic of that first week of war affected the wheat and flour trade as much as it did many others, and it was not long before flour was selling at a price which had never been asked for it in the whole course of the Federation's history.

These were conditions under which the two great Co-operative federations were able to show to advantage, and they were conditions also which proved the wisdom of the Wholesale Society in establishing its own purchasing agency in Canada; for while outside millers were asking as much as 65/ a sack for flour in the first week of the war, the highest price quoted by the Wholesale Society was 37/, and ordinary flour was sold by them at 1/6 per sack advance on normal price. Thus the two federations were in a position to see to it between them that on this side of the Atlantic, at least, no undue advantage was taken of the circumstances created by the war. At the meeting of the Baking Society's board, which took place on 1st September, the committee placed on record their appreciation of the manner in which the crisis brought about by the war had been met by the manager, heads of departments, and employees generally, and desired the manager to convey this expression of the board's appreciation to the heads of departments and employees. At

the quarterly meeting of the Society, the directors had a similar compliment paid to themselves ; Mr Shaw, Cambuslang Society, moving, and Mr Glasse, S.C.W.S., seconding a motion which received the unanimous endorsement of the delegates, thanking the directors for the splendid lead which they had given to the purveyors of bread in the city and far beyond. Mr Shaw drew attention to the importance and magnificence of what had been done, and thought that the nation was entitled to recognise what the Co-operative movement had done, not only now but at all times, in keeping down prices and in keeping goods pure.

Perhaps the position in which the Federation was placed by the war and the view of it taken by the directors can be explained most clearly in the words of Mr Gerrard himself. Addressing the September quarterly meeting, he stated that the profits for the half-year which had ended in July had been a little better than usual, but \*" the future was so indefinite that no one could foresee with any accuracy what would happen. They had been blamed, and were still being blamed in certain quarters, for not increasing the price of bread, but they had resolutely refused, thinking it their duty as a Federation to keep the price of bread and other commodities as low as possible. Notwithstanding, he understood the price of biscuits had been increased in some quarters, and this had brought them some trade that they should have had before. The way in which prices were rushed up at the commencement of the war had seemed to the board most unseemly and unpatriotic, and seemed to show that everyone was trying to make as much as possible out of the war. It was unfortunate that the price of bread would require to be increased before the war was over, but until that step was absolutely necessary they would not increase it, and then only as far as was necessary. They had received several contracts for bread, and the manner in which the manager, heads of departments, and the general body of the employees acted under the stress of these circumstances was worthy of all praise."

#### HALF-PAY TO SOLDIER EMPLOYEES.

At the outbreak of war, a number of the employees had been members of the Territorial Forces and had been called up at

(\* The *Scottish Co-operator*, 25th September 1914.)

once, and the board decided to grant them half-pay. Later, when the call for more men came, many of the employees joined up, and the directors decided that those who enlisted should be placed on the same footing as regarded half-pay as were those who had been called up at the outbreak of war. At this quarterly meeting the directors were accused by a representative of the Bonus Investment Society of not being so generous to their employees who were serving with the Colours as were some other Co-operative societies, but the chairman was able to satisfy the delegates that, in those cases where generosity was most necessary—those of wives with large families—the Baking Society's scheme was the one which gave the wife the larger total income.

This meeting was the one at which the method of giving the minutes in the form of synopses was first adopted, and one of the delegates took occasion to compliment the secretary on having produced synopses of the various minutes which gave the delegates enough information about the business done to enable them to find out what was taking place. At this meeting also a grant of £100 was made to the Belgian Relief Fund, the chairman stating that further grants could be made if occasion demanded. Other donations made were:—£500 to the War Relief Fund, £100 to the Lord Mayor of Belfast's Fund, and £100 to the fund being raised by the Provost of Clydebank. It was urged very strongly by several of the delegates that the administration of the relief fund should be in the hands of the Government. In the minute of the board meeting of 2nd October, the fact is noted that during the past quarter the Society's motors had covered a distance of 125,015 miles. It had certainly been a busy quarter.

#### ARMY CONTRACTS.

Immediately the war broke out, the United Baking Society were inundated with Army contracts. In the first few days they had to make arrangements for supplying camps all over the country, in addition to those for which they had held the contracts. These new camps included those at Perth, Inverness, Falkirk, and Dunblane, and all were supplied at current prices. Yet, notwithstanding the fact that the Baking Society were doing much work for the Army in that first week



of the war, they were not allowed to escape from some of the other discomforts which come to the owners of horses and vehicles in a nation at war. On the 6th of August 18 horses, two motors, and one lorry were commandeered for military purposes. Other large bakers suffered in the same way, and on behalf of all of them a telegram was sent to the Officer in Command, pointing out the importance of the work which was being done by the baking firms in the distribution of food, and complaining that serious hardship to the people would ensue if bakers' horses were removed. With this telegram the committee of the Baking Society associated themselves. To enable them to overtake their work, the Society decided to purchase several motors which had been offered to them, while a circular-letter, explaining the position, was sent out to the societies. That the War Office officials were not ungrateful for the assistance which had been rendered them in the emergency of mobilisation was shown by the fact that at the board meeting which was held on 7th August, letters of congratulation on the manner in which the service of bread to two camps had been carried out were read to the committee.

Among the minor results due to the war may be mentioned the cancelling of a number of social meetings, excursions, marriages, etc., and the closing down of the holiday camp at the end of August. At the beginning of October, another attempt was made by the Glasgow Master Bakers' Association to have the price of bread raised, but again the directors of the Baking Society blocked the way. At the same time, however, the committee came to the decision that, in view of all the circumstances, they would not raise any objection should another overture be made. At the beginning of October, the situation was again reviewed and, in view of the fact that by the beginning of the year the price of flour would be greatly in advance of that then being used, it was agreed to resist no longer a slight advance in the price of bread. For three months the Society had been the means of keeping the price of bread at the rate at which it was being sold at the outbreak of war. If we assume that their action influenced only two hundred thousand households, and that the average consumption of bread in each household was only one 2-lb. loaf per day, this action of the Baking Society was responsible for saving to these

householders in three months no less a sum than £21,250, and probably double that sum, for that only supposes an advance of one farthing per loaf. The first advance in the price of bread took place on 16th November. In Belfast the price of bread had been advanced  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per 2-lb. loaf on 19th October.

#### DEATH OF BISCUIT FACTORY MANAGER.

Mr John Gilmour took charge of the Society's biscuit factory shortly after it was commenced, and he continued to manage it until his death, which took place on 9th October 1914. He was highly respected by both directors and workmen for his devotion to business and his tact and kindness in dealing with those under him. He was succeeded by Mr William Ninian, who had the distinction of being a Bakery-trained man and who was acting as Mr Gilmour's assistant at the time of that gentleman's death.

At the quarterly meeting, the chairman made fitting and sympathetic reference to the loss which the Society had sustained through the death of Mr Gilmour. He also referred to the retiral from active work of one of the Society's bread bakers, Mr W. Lees, who had been in the employment of the Society for forty and a half years. During the quarter an electrically-driven motor had been at work in Glasgow for the Society. It was proving very satisfactory and the board, he said, considered that before long these electrically-driven cars would replace horses on the streets, although petrol-driven cars would still be used for the long journeys.

At this quarterly meeting, some of the delegates wished to know why the board had decided that they would no longer resist an increase in the price of bread seeing that in their minutes they stated that their contract for flour was still unbroken. The chairman, in replying, pointed out that flour at the moment was about 10/ higher in price than before the war, and the board thought it better that the price should be raised by a halfpenny now than that it should be put a penny or three halfpence later, when the stock of cheap flour was completely exhausted. He also stated that eighty-six of the Society's employees were then serving in the Army. At this quarterly meeting, also, the question of granting relief to what were termed "innocent enemy aliens," in other words, British

women who had married subjects of nations at war with Britain, and who through the operation of war were left destitute in this country, was raised through an appeal on their behalf issued by the International Co-operative Alliance executive. A proposal was made to grant £25 to the fund which was being raised, but this was defeated by a two to one majority. The cake show was held this year as usual, but, as was to be expected, the sales were not so great as in some former years. The price had been advanced on the average one penny per pound. In their report to the delegates to the December quarterly meeting, the directors stated that they would regard it as an instruction to make no increase in the prices of their goods so long as they were able to work without actual loss.

#### MORE ARMY CONTRACTS.

In September, an arrangement had been entered into with the Army Authorities by which the Government supplied the flour and the Baking Society baked it into bread for the troops. In addition, several contracts for biscuits for the Army were received. The first three of these totalled 200 tons. The contracts for the baking of bread for the Army continued until early in 1916, when an intimation was received from the Quartermaster of the Scottish Command that the contract would cease, as the Government were now erecting field bakeries for themselves. Two months later, however, another contract was entered into with the Scottish Command on the same terms as formerly. The contracts carried out by Clydebank and Belfast Branches have already been referred to.

#### EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS.

For the whole of the first year of war and almost the whole of the second year, the building department of the Society was kept busy with the extension to the M'Neil Street premises. The principal reason for this extension was the necessity for securing more space for the biscuit factory, and as soon as practicable this extension was carried through. A new travelling oven was installed early in 1915 at a cost of £175, and at the same time a new biscuit cutting machine was got at a cost of £300. A gas-fired travelling oven was also installed before the end of the year and another one, built in accordance



with alterations suggested by the bakery staff, was installed in October 1916. In the spring of 1915, it was decided to cover over the space between bakehouses Nos. 11 and 12 for the purpose of providing dressing rooms for the workers, and at the same time it was decided to put fans in each flat for ventilation purposes.

#### M'NEIL STREET BLOCK COMPLETED.

Parts of the new block at the Adelphi Street and South York Street corner were occupied as they were completed. Particularly, the ground floor was occupied as an extension to biscuit factory, but it was not until June 1916 that the entire building was ready for the official opening ceremony. This was of a very modest character, for, as the chairman stated, the directors did not think the circumstances of the time lent themselves to the celebration of the opening of their splendid addition by means of a grand function, and in this he believed the board had interpreted the wishes of the delegates.

The dressing room for the female workers, which was situated on the fourth flat, was fitted up in an excellent manner. Each worker had a locker of her own, made of cast steel, of which she alone held the key. Fourteen washhand basins were fitted up and eight spray baths. There was also an excellently-appointed sickroom, where a girl who became unwell suddenly could rest, and also a room fitted up with the appropriate scientific appliances, where accidents could be treated at once.

At the quarterly meeting, which took place on the day on which the new wing of the building was opened, the chairman stated that the total cost of the land and the buildings on it had been £11,800, while the total cost of the bakery buildings, including the addition, had been £131,000; which had been depreciated to the extent of £52,000.

#### BUSINESS ORGANISATION.

Shortly after the outbreak of war, the Canadian Government made a donation to the Mother Country of a large quantity of flour, and in the beginning of 1915 the Baking Society purchased 10,000 sacks of this flour. The committee decided that when the bags were emptied they should be sold as souvenirs, and from their sale the sum of £87 was realised, which was distributed amongst local war charities. In March of this year, the board

had a very satisfactory conference with the board of Kinning Park Society and the dairy employees of that society. The subject of the conference was a project of Kinning Park board that the dairy shops of that society should be fitted up for the sale of teabread and pastries. Later, the board of the Baking Society discussed the question of opening shops throughout the city for the sale of smallbread and pastries, but owing to the difficulties imposed by war conditions, the subject was dropped for the time being. Immediately the Armistice was signed, however, the subject was again taken up by the board, with the result that, at the 200th quarterly meeting, proposals were submitted in which were embodied a suggestion that the Society should open a development account and offer to those societies operating in the Glasgow and Suburban area, which were willing to co-operate with the Federation, a proportion of the cost of fitting up shops for the sale of teabread and pastry. In this offer it was provided that the shop, locality, and scheme of fitting should be approved by the directors of the Federation; that only U.C.B.S. goods and confections of Co-operative manufacture should be sold for a period, the period suggested being ten years. If these provisions were agreed to the Baking Society would be responsible for one third of the cost of fitting up the shop, provided that one third did not exceed £150. The scheme received the hearty commendation of the delegates at the meeting at which it was submitted, the only objection taken being to the fact that for the time being it was confined to the Glasgow area.

#### THE PRICE OF BREAD.

Reference is made above to the part which was played by the Federation in keeping down the price of bread. In November 1914 the price of the 4-lb. loaf was increased by a halfpenny; in January 1915 another halfpenny advance took place; and in March of that year another halfpenny; while by the month of May the price had risen to 8d. per 4-lb. loaf. In February 1916 another halfpenny was imposed, and in May of that year yet another halfpenny; while before control came into operation the price in Glasgow and Clydebank had risen to 11½d. and in Belfast to 1/ for the 4-lb. loaf. A rather remarkable note in one of the board minutes for 1916 is that which states that a

letter had been received from a co-operative society, protesting against the action of the Federation in refusing to consent to an increase in the price of bread. The secretary of the Federation mercifully kept the name of the society out of the minute of the meeting.

Prior to the beginning of 1915, the catering for the meals of the employees had been done by a committee of themselves, but in March of that year they approached the board with the request that the Society should take over and carry on this work. During these years the output of the Society was increasing gradually but surely. For the year which ended in January 1915, the output was 230,780 sacks, an average of 4,440 sacks per week for the year, and an increase of 440 per week in three years. On the 3rd of April, it was reported that during the preceding week 5,351 sacks had been baked. This constituted a record week's baking for the Society, but for some time afterwards, until the coming of Government Regulation flour, record after record was made only to be broken. By the month of September 1916, the turnover had risen to 5,410 sacks per week, or almost a thousand sacks of a weekly increase in eighteen months. In the end of that month, the output was 5,925 sacks, and by the end of February 1917 the record figures of 6,012 sacks were reached. In these increases all three bakeries participated, and the rapid increase for 1916 and the early months of 1917 is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that the amount of baking which was done for the military was not nearly so great as it had been in the earlier months of the war. On the last Saturday in 1916, 21,546 dozens of bread were baked and seventy bridecakes made. There had evidently been an epidemic of war marriages at this Hogmanay.

#### BISCUIT AND TEABREAD TRADE.

In the biscuit trade as well as in the bread trade, the directors carried out as far as possible their policy of keeping prices as low as was consistent with securing the Federation against loss, but the rapidity with which the various ingredients for these luxuries of the baking trade increased in price caused the prices to the societies to be raised shortly after the outbreak of war. In March 1915, it was decided to reduce the discount allowed on teabread by two and a half per cent., in order to



compensate in some measure for the increases in the cost of materials. Toward the end of 1915 the Society found that their stocks of biscuits were falling very low, owing to the shortage of labour, as about 30,000 tins of biscuits were being sent out every week. Systematic overtime was worked in the biscuit factory with the object of overcoming the shortage. The Society were also faced with a serious shortage of biscuit tins, due to the fact that societies were not returning the empty tins promptly, while the manufacturers were not able to supply the demand for new tins. To meet this difficulty the directors authorised the purchase of a machine for the manufacture of the tins. By the beginning of 1916 the shortage of materials necessary for the manufacture of pastries, and especially of sugar, was becoming very marked, and in March of that year it was decided to stop the manufacture of a number of the varieties of which sugar was a considerable ingredient. In May, it was found necessary to advance the price of biscuits by, on the average, nine shillings per cwt., yet, notwithstanding the high price, the Society were having difficulty in fulfilling their orders. Earlier in the year it had been decided to look out for suitable ground for an extension of the biscuit factory, and at the quarterly meeting held in September power was granted the directors to spend up to £9,500 in purchasing land for this purpose. By October, the price of biscuits was advanced other eight shillings per cwt., but as this was four shillings per cwt. below the price which other merchants were charging the societies were getting a very good bargain. In November, it was decided to cease the manufacture of all French, iced, and sugar-coated pastries, owing to the increasing shortage of sugar.

#### THE SOCIETY AND ITS WORKERS.

At the outbreak of war many employees joined the Army or Navy, and to these the Society decided to pay half-wages. As the months passed, more and more of the younger men joined up, first under the Derby Scheme and later under the Conscription Act, so that the carrying out of the policy of paying half-wages meant the disbursing of a considerable sum every half-year, and by the end of 1916 the sum of £10,628 had been so expended; £7,892 being paid to dependants and £2,736 retained in the hands of the Society at the credit of employees

serving with the Colours. At this time, 304 of the Society's employees had joined the Services, and eighteen had made the great sacrifice.

This drain on the male workers of the Society brought troubles of its own in its train. We have already seen that considerable difficulty was being experienced in meeting the demand of customer societies for biscuits, while the difficulty in meeting the demand for bread was equally great. Toward the end of 1915, the Operative Bakers' Union consented to allow their members to begin work one hour earlier on Saturday mornings, while a number of men who had been formerly employed as "jobbers" were given full-time employment. In the beginning of the following year an attempt was made to induce the Bakers' Union to permit the employment of women in the bakery, but this permission they refused, although they admitted that "dilution" was in operation in similar establishments. In July of 1916 an agreement with regard to dilution was reached, whereby it was decided that, after all reasonable efforts had been made to obtain male labour, females should be appointed in the same proportion as apprentices; that two girls could be appointed for every man who left, and that the arrangement was to continue for the duration of the war or of conditions created by the war.

In that year some difficulty was experienced in getting the bakers to come to terms with the employers in the Glasgow district on the question of wages, but the dispute was finally adjusted after notices to cease work had been handed in. The terms finally agreed on were substantially those which had been offered by the Federation, and gave the bakers an increase in wages of four shillings per week. The bakers did not take kindly to the proposal to introduce female labour into the bakehouse, and when the directors proposed to take that step protested strongly, notwithstanding the agreement which had been arrived at on the subject, and although they were working very many hours of overtime each week. The directors therefore decided that the question of the employment of female labour should be referred to the War Emergency Committee, and that committee gave their award in favour of the introduction of female labour into the pastry and smallbread flats, but would not allow them to take part in the baking of loaf bread.

## DELIVERY DIFFICULTIES.

We have already seen that the needs of the war transcended all other considerations in the opinion of the War Office officials, who commandeered many horses and vans from the Society at the outbreak of war and later. The difficulties of delivery thus created the directors endeavoured to overcome by the use of motors for delivery. But even machinery will not go on for ever without requiring repairs, and as breakdowns became more frequent increasing difficulty was being found in having the necessary repairs done, because of shortage of labour of the necessary skill, and because also of the shortage of the necessary material. Another delivery difficulty had a different cause. The shortage of labour was general, and the retail stores were as greatly handicapped as were other businesses. In 1916, with the view of overcoming this handicap to some extent and at the same time ensuring as far as possible that the shops should not be open in the absence of skilled supervision, the societies adopted the policy of closing their shops during the lunch hour. To some extent this policy attained the object which the societies had in view, but as soon as it was put into operation the Baking Society found their delivery difficulties increased, for their vans had to stand idle while the shops were closed. Representations on the subject were made to the various societies, which gave very favourable consideration in most cases, and the practice grew up of leaving one employee in each shop to take delivery of goods which arrived during the lunch hour.

Early in 1916 the societies gave tangible form to their recognition of the strenuous work which was being imposed on the directors by circumstances brought about by the war; this tangible recognition taking the form of an all-round increase in salaries and allowances for committee work.

Yet strenuous as had been their work during those first two years of the war, and great as had been their difficulties, the two years on which they were about to enter were to provide even more strenuous work and to produce difficulties which were so great as to prove almost insurmountable. They were to provide conditions of bread baking which were to change loaf bread from being one of the most palatable forms of food into for the time being one of the most detestable and detested.



While the Congress was meeting at Leicester in 1915, the news arrived that Mr Duncan M'Culloch, who had done so much to build up the Baking Society, had passed away, and fitting reference was made to his decease at the quarterly meeting in June, and also at the annual meeting with the representatives of the Irish societies in July. His death removed a man to whom the shareholders of the Baking Society, and particularly the shareholders in Ireland, owed much, and many were the expressions of regret when the news became generally known.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### BREAD BAKING UNDER CONTROL.

FAMINE POSSIBILITIES—CHANGES IN QUALITY OF FLOUR—FOOD CONTROL DEPARTMENT ESTABLISHED—BAKERS' DIFFICULTIES—THE POSITION OF THE U.C.B.S.—A BIG LAND PURCHASE—ILLNESS OF THE PRESIDENT—A NATURAL WORKING DAY BY ORDER—ITS DIFFICULTIES—ENTERTAINMENTS TO SOLDIERS—BRANCH BAKERIES—IRELAND—LEADHILLS—ROTHESAY—BUTE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY FORMED—SUBSIDISED BREAD—AN INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL—DELIVERY DIFFICULTIES—EMPLOYEES ON MILITARY SERVICE—THE END OF THE TASK.

THE first two years of the war had brought difficulties in their train which the bakers of the country found considerable difficulty in overcoming ; but the conditions under which they were called on to produce bread in the following two years were such as had not been experienced for at least a hundred years, and there came a time when the country was faced with the possibility of having to do without bread altogether for a period. Fortunately this possibility did not become reality, but it was the cause of material changes in the quality of the flour used for breadmaking and of the conditions under which the bread was made and sold which would have seemed impossible before the war began. By the early winter of 1916 the possibility of a condition of things obtaining which would prevent the importation of foodstuffs, and particularly of wheat, in sufficient quantities to provide full supplies for the population of the British Isles began to force itself on the Government, so they appointed a gentleman to the position of Food Controller and conferred on him almost despotic powers. One result of this control of food was a drastic interference with the milling of flour. In Scotland the millers produced flour in ordinary times which contained a little more than 70 per cent. of the wheat ; the first fruits of the new order of things was a regulation that the extraction from the wheat should be increased, by about 8 per cent.

There can be no doubt that under the circumstances this regulation was necessary. There was a time in the history of these islands when practically all the food consumed by the people was grown in the country; but during the lifetime of the last generation this position had gradually altered until Britain was dependent on wheat imported from abroad for four-fifths of the bread supply of her people. There had always been pessimists who foresaw, as a result of a war with a maritime power, a danger of interruption to the steady supply of sea-borne food which was necessary if the people were to be saved from starvation, and who uttered warnings which passed more or less unheeded; but the time had arrived when these warnings seemed likely to become justified. Towards the end of 1916 it was becoming apparent that there was likely to be a world shortage of foodstuffs, and particularly of wheat, and doubts were being expressed in well-informed circles as to whether there would be supplies sufficient to enable the people to carry on until the 1917 crop was ready. While this world shortage was due in a measure to the war, because of the number of men who usually devoted themselves to agricultural pursuits who were then engaged in war work of one form or another or serving with the Forces, it was also due in large measure to a world shortage for which Nature, through the medium of a bad summer and a wet autumn, was responsible.

The result was that in this country the regulations affecting flour extraction became more and more rigorous, until not only were millers extracting a proportion approaching 25 per cent. additional from the wheat, rejecting practically nothing but the outer husk, but many other varieties of cereal, even including a considerable proportion of maize, were pressed into service and mixed with the flour from which bread had to be baked. In some cases potato flour was also used for this purpose. Fortunately, the famine which had threatened in the summer of 1917 was staved off, but the inveterate submarine campaign waged by the Germans during the whole of that year was responsible for the destruction of many food-carrying ships and of many thousands of tons of wheat and flour which were being conveyed to this country from America as well as of many other varieties of food.



## BAKERS' DIFFICULTIES.

All this was the cause of much worry to bakers. They had been accustomed to the manufacture of bread from flour the quality of which was well known and regulated with almost scientific accuracy, but under the new order of things they found the knowledge which they had acquired laboriously over a long period of years almost useless to them. So long as they were dealing with wheat flour, even if that flour did contain a large proportion of offal which had formerly been used to feed cattle, the position was not quite so bad, for most of them had been in the habit of baking a greater or lesser proportion of what was termed "wheaten" and "wholemeal" bread. But when flour produced from rye, barley, and even maize had to be added their troubles began, for only by chemical analysis was it possible for them to determine the proportions in which the various cereals were used, and these proportions were varied arbitrarily week by week at the whim of the Wheat Commission authorities; while the millers were absolutely prohibited from giving any information on the subject. Thus, when after a series of experiments they had ascertained the method by which they could produce the best loaf from a given flour, they suddenly discovered that the mixture had been altered, and that their experiments had to begin all over again; and this continued to be the position for some time even after the end of the war.

## THE POSITION OF THE U.C.B.S.

While the position of the average private baker was that which has been described above, the baking departments of Co-operative societies found themselves in a very much worse position in direct ratio as they had been loyal hitherto in the use of Co-operatively milled flour. The flour mills of Scotland did not produce more than one half of the flour which was used in the country, with the result that the remainder had to be imported; but the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society imported wheat and themselves milled practically all the flour sold by them. The consequence was that as the quality of "Government Regulation" flour deteriorated, the flour which was supplied by the Wholesale Society's mills, in common with that supplied by the other millers, was of such a nature

that bread baked with it was inferior in quality and unpalatable. As, however, bakers were compelled to take flour from the source from which they procured it at the time when the Food Control regulations came into force, those who had formerly used a considerable proportion of imported flour were allowed to mix a good percentage of the flour which was still being imported with the "Regulation" flour, and were thus enabled to produce a comparatively white and palatable loaf; while the Wholesale Society, which had not been in the habit of importing much flour, were now allowed by those responsible for the bread regulations to import only a very small proportion, and their customers suffered accordingly. It was only after repeated representations had been made to the Government and the Wheat Commission that, ultimately, the proportion of imported flour which Co-operative bakers generally were allowed to use was raised considerably.

From this cause the Baking Society was as great a sufferer as were the others. The bread became more and more unpalatable as the admixture of foreign cereals in the flour used increased, and complaints about the quality of the bread began to come in with irritating frequency. The receipt of these complaints, justifiable as they were, must have been all the more irritating to the committee from the fact that they found themselves the victims of circumstances over which they had not the slightest control. They knew that the bread which they were producing was unpalatable, and the fact that the Germans had to eat bread which was very much inferior was but poor consolation in view of the fact that many of their trade rivals were able to produce better bread because of the larger proportion of white flour which they were allowed to use. There ensued, as a consequence, a very considerable decline in the bread sales of the Society. The customer societies would have taken the bread, but their members could not and would not eat it. From much the same causes the trade in biscuits and in teabread declined also. The use of sugar in biscuits or in teabread was prohibited, as was the manufacture of pastries. The result was that while the output for the quarter which ended in October 1916 was 68,533 sacks, that for the quarter which ended in October 1917 was 67,132 sacks, and that for the corresponding quarter of 1918 was

62,867. And if the details for loaf bread in M'Neil Street alone are taken, the contrast is still more striking. The output for 1918 had fallen below that of 1915 by over 400 sacks, and below that of the quarter which ended in April 1917 by over 12,000 sacks.

#### A BIG LAND PURCHASE.

By the end of 1916 M'Neil Street bakery, and particularly the biscuit factory, was again becoming congested, and power was obtained from the quarterly meeting to spend up to £9,750 on the purchase of more ground. At the time this power was obtained, the committee had under consideration the fact that the ground on the east side of M'Neil Street, extending from the Clydeside to Govan Street, was in the market, and ultimately the purchase of this ground was completed at a cost of £9,750. The ground contained an area of 6,590 yards. Much of it was occupied by buildings of a temporary character; the only buildings of a permanent nature on the site being two tenements at the southern end. This site has not yet been utilised by the Society, but it forms an admirable property which is available for any extensions which may require to be undertaken in the future. Meantime it is let at a rental which gives a net return of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on the capital cost of the site.

#### ILLNESS OF PRESIDENT.

In November of 1916 Mr Gerrard was laid aside for a number of weeks by a severe illness, from which, fortunately, he recovered after a time. With the exception of one short interval, he was able to carry out his duties until the beginning of November 1918, when he was again laid aside with an illness so severe in its nature that ultimately he was informed by his medical adviser that he would have to give up all thought of public work for the future. The last regular meeting of the committee at which he was able to be in attendance was that held on 10th October 1918.

#### A NATURAL WORKING DAY—BY ORDER.

Several years before the outbreak of war the directors of the Baking Society made a determined effort to institute a natural working day for bakers, but were unsuccessful, as a natural working day meant the use of bread which was cold



before it reached the shops, and this the members of the stores refused to accept. In March of 1917, however, the Government, impelled by the exigencies of war, were able to do, practically with the stroke of a pen, what the unaided efforts of the Baking Society had failed to do. This Order of the Food Controller decreed that bread must be at least twelve hours old before it was sold in the shops. It is quite likely that those who devised the Order did not know and did not desire to know how their proposals were going to affect those engaged in the trade. The bakers were faced with the necessity of rearranging their methods at a moment's notice. They had to rearrange the working day, and also to find storage accommodation overnight for their total day's output, and on Friday nights for almost double that quantity. One good result of the Order was, as has already been mentioned, that the working bakers at last obtained a natural working day, for their hours of work were fixed to begin at 8 a.m. and to end at 4.30 p.m.

The storage difficulty was one which was more difficult to overcome. At M'Neil Street storage accommodation had to be found for 84,000 2-lb. loaves on ordinary weekdays and for 156,000 on Fridays. This meant the fitting up of every available space with racks and trays in which to place the bread, and a very serious addition to the amount of labour necessary. On the other hand it meant that there would be a considerable saving on delivery charges, as societies were able to take in larger quantities in the mornings, and so minimise the duplication of deliveries. The difficulties were all overcome, and, in a very short time, the delivery side of the business was working as smoothly as the attenuated state of the delivery staff could be expected to permit.

#### ENTERTAINING SOLDIERS.

During the years of war a feature of the philanthropic work of the Society was the entertaining of large parties of convalescent soldiers from the Glasgow military hospitals. The Society began this good work in August 1916, when a party of convalescent soldiers from Stobhill Hospital, numbering 200, were conveyed to Calderwood Castle in brakes, and entertained there. The party were accompanied by the Society's Silver Band, and an enjoyable afternoon was passed. Then, early in

1917, another party of wounded were taken to a matinee at a theatre in the afternoon, and were afterwards conveyed in brakes to the Society's premises, where they had tea, and a splendid concert was provided. Several of these theatre entertainments were given, and were much appreciated by the recipients of the Society's kindness.

In another way the Society also showed kindness to men who had been fighting their country's battles. An "Overseas Club" for members of the Colonial Forces had been established in Glasgow, and during 1918 and 1919 a party of visitors from this club were taken over the bakery every Thursday, being afterwards entertained to tea, when the work which was being done by the Federation and the principles on which it was managed were explained to the visitors. Early in 1919, a letter was received from the Scottish Sectional Board of the Co-operative Union, commending the propaganda work which was being done in this way by the U.C.B.S. directors, and offering a number of copies of "Working Men Co-operators" for distribution. The Baking Society directors were much gratified by this commendation and gladly accepted the gift of books, which were afterwards distributed to the Colonial visitors.

#### BRANCH BAKERIES.

Various difficulties attach to a gigantic bread bakery which are not apparent in the working of any other commercial concern of similar size, and chief amongst these is that of rapid and cheap delivery. The perishable nature of bread and the ease with which it is injured by crushing make carriage by railway impracticable, while combined with these difficulties is the fact that the majority of bread customers desire to have it as soon after it is baked as possible. All these disadvantages combine to limit the distance within which a bakery can operate successfully to a radius of about twelve miles, and even on the outer edges of that radius it is doubtful if the cost of delivery does not counterbalance the saving caused by larger production. Yet the advantages of having bread baked by a large Co-operative organisation, instead of by many small ones, are obvious. In the first place, the large buyer has the advantage of buying all the raw materials used at rock-bottom prices: he has the advantage also of a wider knowledge of the

fluctuations of a market notorious for rapidity of rise and fall, and this expert knowledge enables him in normal times so to average the cost of flour used that it is always at the lowest average possible.

It can be easily understood, therefore, that Co-operators, struggling with adversity and yet desirous of providing Co-operatively-baked bread for their members, should turn to the U.C.B.S. for help.

In this way there had come to the directors within recent years numerous calls for help. Unfortunately, the majority of these arrived at a time when it was impossible to give the help desired. The first of these calls came from Ireland. In and around Dublin there were several small societies, having a combined membership of somewhere over two thousand. The Dublin Industrial Society, after unsuccessfully endeavouring a few years earlier to get the Baking Society to help in the financing of a bakery in Dublin, had gone ahead with the erection of a bakery for themselves, but it had never been very successful. The Society itself was not too successful for a time, owing to the fact that the members were not pulling very well together; and indeed, at one period during the early years of the war, it seemed to be in danger of collapsing altogether. The bakery was not very successful, because the quality of the bread which was being produced left something to be desired, and this again was due in some measure at least to the fact that the men employed did not seem to realise that there were some operations in connection with bread baking which could not afford to wait on the convenience of anyone if disastrous results to the quality of the finished product were not to accrue. On more than one occasion one or other of the foremen in Ravenhill Bakery went down to Dublin to give the Co-operative bakers there the benefit of his expert advice.

Finally, an invitation came from Dublin, asking that representatives from the management of the Baking Society should attend a meeting of representatives from five societies in and around that city, with a view to taking over and working the bakery belonging to Dublin Industrial Society in the interests of Co-operators in and around the city. The members of the board discussed the question in all its bearings—social, political, and financial. They recognised that the cause of Co-operation



in Dublin was much in need of a helping hand, and they were also well aware of the difficulties from a trade point of view which would confront them, but they resolved to attend the conference. They suggested, however, that representatives from the executive of the Co-operative Union, the Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society, and the Belfast advisory committee should also be invited.

At the same time, a request for the erection of a branch bakery was received from Enniskillen Society and several agricultural societies in the neighbourhood of that town, and the deputation took advantage of the opportunity which their visit to Dublin gave them to visit Enniskillen also. The information gained in the course of this visit was discussed at a special meeting of the board, which was held on 23rd August, when it was resolved, in the interest of the Co-operative movement generally, and in view of the success which had attended other efforts, to place the subject on the programme of business for the quarterly meeting, with a recommendation from the board that they be empowered to establish branch bakeries in Ireland. When the recommendation came before the quarterly meeting of the members, Mr Gerrard explained that there were a number of small associations of Co-operators in various districts in Ireland who were anxious to use Co-operatively-produced bread, but who could not be expected to produce it for themselves. They were situated so far from Belfast that they could not be supplied economically from there, and the only other alternative was that small branch bakeries should be opened in these districts. Already negotiations had taken place, but before the members of the board went further, they wished to know whether the delegates were prepared to continue the policy of good work which had been begun at Belfast. The recommendation of the board was approved by a very large majority of the representatives of the societies present at the meeting, in opposition to an amendment which laid down the proposition that "no new bakery be erected in Ireland until definite details had been submitted for approval to an ordinary or special meeting of the Society."

After some further inquiries had been made, the board as a whole gave further consideration to the question at a special meeting which was held on 27th November 1917. At this

meeting it was stated that in and around Dublin there were ten societies within a radius of twenty miles, whose capital amounted in the aggregate to about £3,000. Dublin Society were willing to dispose of their bakery for £2,000. Only a meagre response had been given, however, to inquiries as to the amount of trade which was likely to be obtained from these ten societies, but the opinion was expressed that if the branch was once established the trade would be sure to come in time. Reference was made at this meeting to the lethargic state of the Co-operators of the district, and to the need which existed to give the movement a lift out of the weak state into which it had fallen. All the members of the committee who had visited the district were impressed with the fact that a good field for Co-operative work existed, provided that good management was given. The committee expressed agreement that, given normal conditions, there were reasonable prospects of the success of a branch established at Dublin, but they were divided on the question of whether the purchase should be made at that time, and remitted the decision on that point to the whole board.

With respect to the proposal to establish a branch at Enniskillen, the members who had visited the district were in agreement. There was in the district a nucleus sufficient to warrant placing a branch there, but no bakery was available, although a building capable of being made into a bakery could be purchased. The restrictions placed on the use of building material and on the supplying of machinery placed an embargo on going ahead at the moment, however, and they must wait until the war was over.

Mr Young, the manager, spoke strongly in favour of rendering help to Dublin Society; but he pointed out that for some time, at least, there would be little surplus if any, although when the district was penetrated thoroughly with Co-operative principles there would come ample compensation for the initial sacrifices. He thought, therefore, that it was the clear duty of the Baking Society to take it in hand. The board, however, was very evenly divided on the question, five voting for making no recommendation to take over the Dublin bakery meantime, while six voted in favour of making such a recommendation. With respect to Enniskillen, however, the board were unanimous that a branch should be established there as soon as possible,

and agreed to recommend that this be proceeded with at the end of the war. At the quarterly meeting held in December, however, the proposal to take over Dublin Society's bakery and establish a branch there was defeated, although that to establish a branch at Enniskillen was approved. How much the situation which had developed in Dublin and neighbourhood in the spring of 1916 had to do with the decision of the delegates it is impossible to say, but undoubtedly the political situation when combined with the influence of the known apathy towards Co-operation of the people of Dublin and the financial risk with no sure prospects of recovery weighed with the delegates when coming to the decision they did.

Since then premises have been acquired at Enniskillen, on a site quite near to the premises of the S.C.W.S., and the whole position has been surveyed thoroughly, but no definite steps to erect a bakery there have yet been taken as the cost of building materials has been found prohibitive.

Shortly after the outbreak of war the U.C.B.S. became shareholders to the extent of £1,000 in the Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society, and at the quarterly meeting of members, which was held in December 1918, they took up 100 one pound shares in the Enniskillen Co-operative Milling Association, a Co-operative association which has been formed to establish a meal mill at Enniskillen.

So far we have been considering only the establishing of branches of the Baking Society in Ireland, but requests for branches were received at various times from widely distant parts of Scotland as well. In particular, just at the time when a final decision was arrived at on the question of taking over Dublin Society's bakery, a request was received from the neighbouring societies of Leadhills and Wanlockhead that the Baking Society should take over and work a bakery in Leadhills for the purpose of supplying these two societies with bread. The master of works was sent to inspect, with the result that, later, the board were empowered to open a bakery at the place they deemed most suitable for supplying the trade of the district. Like every other building scheme, this of theirs was hung up during the war; but after careful consideration it was decided that a bakery should be established in Leadhills, and this has now been done. An application was received from



Kirkconnel Society about the same time as that from the Leadhills district, and it was thought at first that one bakery might be erected which would suffice to serve both districts, but an inspection of the road connecting the two places showed that if this was not impracticable it would be at least dangerous, and the idea was abandoned. Nothing further has been done yet with respect to a branch at Kirkconnel.

#### ROTHESAY BRANCH.

For years attempts have been made to establish a branch of the Co-operative movement in Rothesay, but this was found to be impossible until the Baking Society took the job in hand. Their possession of Roseland Camp on Canada Hill had given them a footing in the town, and in some measure this was of assistance to them. Early in 1917 the board received information that a bakery situated on the water front was to let, and they made arrangements to secure it with such celerity that by the 24th of March in that year it came into their possession on a three years' lease. They were not long in possession, however, before they were informed that the lease would not be renewed when it expired. It seems that the private traders of the town had made representations to the owner of the property, and this was the result. For years the traders had proved uniformly successful in preventing Co-operation from getting a foothold in the town, and they were not going to be balked without an effort to prevent it. But the directors of the Baking Society were just as determined as were the traders of Rothesay, and after lengthy and long-continued negotiations with the directors of the Wholesale Society, who had been on the lookout for premises in Rothesay for many years but had been uniformly unsuccessful in securing them, the Baking Society became, early in 1918, proprietors of the property in which their bakery was situated.

The property which had been purchased included a shop which could be used as a grocery department, and for some time efforts were made to get one or other of the Glasgow societies to open a branch there, but unsuccessfully. The committee of Clydebank Society were inclined to view the matter favourably, but when the question was brought before a general meeting of the members of the society for their

approval, they refused to consent. Greenock Central Society were also given the opportunity of opening a branch, but they also were afraid to venture in face of the prevailing restrictions on supplies. The result was that those who had been customers of the Baking Society in Rothesay were invited to form a society of their own, the Wholesale Society and the Baking Society subscribing a large part of the capital between them. The society was formed with Mr William Maxwell, J.P., president of the International Co-operative Alliance, as president. Co-operation had been established in Rothesay.

The traders of the town had not yet shot their bolt, however. The Co-operative bakery was doing well, and it was possible that a Co-operative grocery and provision business would do equally well; but, fortunately for the traders, the local Food Control Committee refused permission to the new society to open their grocery branch, on the plea that the shops already open in the town were sufficient in number to do the trade, and in this attitude they were backed up by the Edinburgh Court. At the beginning of 1919, however, the embargo was removed, and the new society has proved very successful.

#### SUBSIDISED BREAD.

In September of 1917 the Food Control Department of the Government decided to fix the price of the four-pound loaf at ninepence, giving the flour to the bakers at 44/3 a sack. As the stocks which the bakers had bought had cost much more than this price, the Food Control Department agreed to make up the difference between 44/3 and the invoice price, allowing a maximum discount on the invoice price of 18/ per sack. A maximum allowance for carriage, baking material, and wages was 23/ per sack. When the Baking Society had taken stock of their flour they found that the difference between the discount allowed by the Government and the invoice price of the flour represented a loss to the Society of nearly £7,000. To the delegates at the quarterly meeting the chairman explained that this was due to the fact that the Society had purchased a large quantity of white flour in order to improve the quality of the bread. This flour had cost from 80/ to 90/ a sack, and even with the maximum Government discount allowed they were losing about 30/ a sack.

The general result of the Government's policy was that bread which, if sold at a price which corresponded with the market price of flour, would have cost one shilling for the four-pound loaf, has been sold at ninepence, the taxpayer paying the difference, which amounted to about £50,000,000 per annum.

#### AN INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL.

Early in 1918 an Industrial Council for the Baking Trade was set up on the lines laid down in the Report of the Royal Commission for the avoidance of Industrial Disputes. On this council Mr James Young, manager of the Baking Society, was appointed to look after the interests of the Co-operative societies in Scotland which had bread bakeries. The objects of the council provide for the joint consideration by representatives of employers and employees of such questions as wages, working conditions, regulation of employment, entry of apprentices and their training. So far as it has gone the council has proved of service in bringing representatives of the employers and the workers together at regular intervals to discuss affairs of the trade.

#### EMPLOYEES ON MILITARY SERVICE.

The Baking Society contributed its full quota to the Forces of the Crown during the war. In all 426 employees served in one or other of the Arms of the Crown: M'Neil Street contributing 331; Clydebank, 60; Belfast, 34; and Rothesay, 1. Of that number fifty made the great sacrifice, eleven became prisoners of war, and forty-four were discharged as unfit for further service; while, at the signing of the armistice, 321 men were still serving. To these men or their dependants the Society paid from 4th August 1914 to 26th January 1919, the date which marks the end of the fiftieth year of the Society's existence, the sum of £30,105. The arrangement made by the directors was that each man who joined up should receive half wages irrespective of what his Army allowance might be. By this method they ensured that the men with the largest number of dependants should be in receipt of the largest total incomes.

#### THE END OF THE TASK.

We have now come to the end of our task. In the preceding pages we have traced the growth of the Society from its infancy



when it was cradled in the little bakery in Coburg Street ; we have followed it through all the struggles of its early years, and have seen difficulty after difficulty surmounted. Growth has followed on growth, and the Society has gone on adding to its usefulness until it stands to-day a monument to the faith and foresight of the men who conceived it, and a monument also to the shrewdness and integrity of the men who in successive generations have had charge of its welfare. In its early years the directors were often in need of money with which to meet expenses. To-day it has invested funds not required at the moment for business purposes, and including £70,000 in War Loan, which amount in the aggregate to considerably over £300,000. It began with a membership of eight societies and a few pounds of capital. At the end of the fiftieth year the share capital was almost £250,000 ; while loans and deposits were in excess of that sum, and there were 211 shareholding societies.

The prospect is rosy. The directors are on the outlook for new worlds to conquer. Already they have devised plans whereby they can come to the assistance of the Glasgow societies in setting up shops for the sale of teabread and pastries. They have requests for branch bakeries from various parts of Scotland and Ireland which have yet to be considered. They have the ever-increasing urgency of the transport problem to deal with, and on them falls, also, the duty of counteracting the ever-present tendency on the part of societies at the outskirts to break off and begin baking for themselves. That is to say, they have ever before them the problem of making the huge organisation which they control more and ever more efficient, while maintaining those good relations with their employees which have been such a noteworthy feature during the long life of the Society ; and they have to continue to do this while continuing to manifest that true spirit of Co-operation and brotherliness which has been so distinguishing a feature of the attitude and atmosphere which surrounds the Federation. That they will achieve all this there is little doubt, for the directors of to-day are worthy successors of the men who wrought and fought that the Federation might stand where it does.

## CHAPTER XX.

### EDUCATIONAL WORK.

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION—EARLY EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE SOCIETY  
—AN EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE FORMED—ITS CONSTITUTION—WORK  
AMONGST THE YOUNG—THE U.C.B.S. BAND FORMED—SOCIAL WORK—  
LECTURES—CLASSES DURING WORKING HOURS—A NEW DEPARTURE—  
AN EDUCATIONAL TOUR—A SECOND TOUR—VALUABLE WORK—THE  
YEARS OF WAR.

IN all propaganda work there must necessarily be an element of education, for at least a part of educational work consists in the imparting of information, although the more important part is the training to think. Co-operators from the very earliest days of the movement have recognised the necessity of education, and have devoted a part of the funds which came to them from Co-operative trading to its support. Indeed the Rochdale Pioneers went further, and amongst their objects they placed taking control of the functions of education, meantime devoting  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the surplus which accrued to them from their Co-operative trading to the furtherance of education amongst themselves. This example of theirs was followed by many other societies, and associations of a more or less educational nature were formed wherever a number of Co-operators could find it convenient to meet. It was from the conferences of representatives from the societies that the idea grew of what has become ultimately the supreme educational authority of the movement in Britain, the Co-operative Union. Even before the formation of the Union, conferences were being held in Scotland to discuss Co-operative problems, and almost from the beginning the Baking Society affiliated with the nearest of the Associations under whose auspices such conferences were held. Thus we find them subscribing to the funds of the Glasgow and Suburbs Conference Association and the Renfrewshire Conference Association, and, later, to all the other district associations in the country. But

even before they began to subscribe to the conference associations they were taking an interest in and giving support to the literature of the movement. We find them at the quarterly meeting which took place on 26th August 1871 agreeing to subscribe for twelve copies of the *Co-operative News*, which were to be distributed amongst the employees in the bakery.

The members of the committee were evidently diligent readers of this journal too, for, as has been noted previously, they embodied in their minutes at a later date a criticism of some remarks which had appeared in that journal relative to the Society. It was not until 1896, however, that it was decided to set up a separate committee, which would have under its control the educative and recreative agencies of the Society. Just prior to that they had published a *Year Book* which contained a history of the Society to date. A branch of the Women's Guild had also been formed, and classes in singing and ambulance work, as well as a literary society. At a special meeting which the committee held on 1st February 1896 they came to the unanimous decision that the time had now arrived when an educational and charitable fund should be formed by the Society, out of which all charitable donations and subscriptions should be taken. At the following meeting the sum of £50 was voted for the purpose of forming an educational fund.

The members of the board took the employees into consultation with respect to the administration of the educational fund, with the result that the following constitution was drawn up and agreed to:—

#### DUTIES AND WORK OF EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE.

This Committee shall consist of three Directors, who shall hold office for one year, and shall be elected at the December meeting of each year. They, along with the four members appointed by the employees, shall form the Educational Committee.

They shall take a special oversight of all the clubs, classes, and meetings of an educational nature connected with the Bakery.

They shall have at their disposal for the furtherance of educational work connected with the Bakery 10 per cent. or such other proportion of the Educational and Benevolent Fund (Rule 14) as the Directors may from time to time determine.

It will further be expected from them to make recommendations to the Directors from time to time on matters of public educational



interest, and it shall be competent for the Directors at any time to remit such matters to them for consideration and report.

They shall meet monthly or oftener if required, and submit a short minute of their proceedings at the Directors' bi-monthly meeting.

The first report of the educational committee was issued in December 1896. From this report it appeared that the nucleus of a library had been brought together, and that the library had been opened with 180 volumes; the literary association had had a membership of 105, and the women's guild a membership of fifty. A musical association had also been conducted under the auspices of the committee, which had secured forty-nine members, and the choir had given a concert in the Wellington Palace. They had also sung at a mass meeting of Co-operators held in the City Hall, and had supplied the music at a propaganda meeting held at Blairdardie by the Glasgow and Suburbs Conference Association council. A swimming class had had a membership of sixty, and an ambulance class had a membership of thirty-five on the roll. A physical drill class had been started for the younger lads in the factory, and a Christian Association with twenty members on the roll had been started, and carried on a service every Sunday in the Society's hall. Altogether the committee had done a remarkably good year's work for a beginning, and had reason to congratulate themselves on the success which had attended their efforts.

The members of the educational committee had not been long at work before they came to the conclusion that the Society owed a duty to its younger workers which it could not afford to neglect. The Society employed over a hundred young people under eighteen years of age, and it was the wish of the committee that they should find some method by means of which they could assist these young people. Their first step was the convening of a meeting of the young people in the London Street tearooms, where they were addressed by Dr. Henry Dyer and Mr James Campsie; and, as a result of this meeting, eleven of the young people joined the Glasgow continuation classes. It was during the second year of the educational committee's existence that the Society's band was formed, and the educational committee lent valuable financial aid in establishing it, with the result that in the years which have followed the band has proved itself a most valuable

Co-operative asset. Mr James Campsie, M.A., was also commissioned to write a booklet for the children, which was entitled "Glimpses of Co-operative Land," and of which some 22,000 copies were sold.

The committee and the various agencies under its control also took an active part in the work of the Homes bazaar, with the result that they were in the happy position of being able to contribute £480 to its funds. The members of the committee also took an active part in the elections to the various local governing bodies of the city and in the work of the Ward Committee. In 1899 a holiday club was formed, which in its first year of existence disbursed £220 amongst the members at holiday time. New agencies were continually being added, and new methods tried of influencing the younger members amongst the firm's employees and of providing recreation and education for them. In 1903 a junior musical association was started, and continued to do well for a number of years, as did also an offshoot in the form of a kinderspiel choir, which gave each year successful performances of operettas to large audiences. A rowing club also became an immediate success until the war brought to many of the members another form of outdoor exercise of an even more strenuous nature.

In 1905 a series of lectures was organised; such well-known men as Mr Will Crooks, T. P. O'Connor, M.P., and David Macrae being the lecturers engaged. Annual festivals of the employees also became the rule, and later, annual excursions in the summer, which proved very successful. A whist club and a football club were next formed, and in 1908 a beginning with a holiday camp was made, twenty-five young people being sent to the Y.M.C.A. camp at Ardgool, with the assistance of the educational committee. From time to time the committee paid the fees of employees who attended classes at the Technical College, and in 1912 they came to the unanimous decision that in future the fees of all employees, irrespective of age or sex, who devoted their spare time to attendance at technical or continuation classes, should be paid for them, provided the attendances they made satisfied the committee. They also decided that all junior employees who attended the Technical College for a session should be allowed to attend day classes at the college, time so spent to be accounted as part of their

day's work. This admirable decision, arrived at long before any steps in this direction were taken by the educational authorities on either side of the Border, is an evidence of the value which the committee set on education.

#### A NEW DEPARTURE.

During these years one or more prominent lecturers were engaged each quarter to deliver lectures to the employees. Amongst such lecturers, there were in later years, Mr Andrew Young, Miss Margaret M'Millan, and Mr Philip Snowden. The Society's kinderspiels continued to be very successful, as did the other agencies, but there was a sameness about the work of the committee which made for monotony; and in 1913 Mr James Young came forward with a suggestion to the committee which met with their hearty and unanimous approval. Mr Young pointed out that, while with some people education ceased as soon as they left school, with others it did not cease until they had had a University course and a tour round the world. The workers could not afford a tour round the world, nor a University course, but it was within the power of the educational committee of the Society to appoint several of their employees to make a tour of some of the most prominent concerns on the other side of the Border, and so learn their methods of doing business; how they provided for the housing of their employees, the relation of the employees to trade unionism, recreative societies, conditions of labour, hours, etc., and he suggested that such firms as the C.W.S., Cadbury's, Lever's, and Rowntree's might be visited with profit. On the return of the deputation, short papers might be prepared by the members in which they would give accounts of what they had seen.

He pointed out that civic and other bodies believed in the value of deputations as necessary in enlarging the outlook and in helping the development of education.

#### THE DEPUTATION.

The deputation, which consisted of three male and two female employees, the manager, the chairman, and Mr Cadiz, spent the last week of June 1913 in visiting the premises of several English firms, for the purpose of getting information on the points mentioned above, and recorded their experiences.



and impressions in a pamphlet which was printed and issued to employees and members of the Society. The principal points dealt with were superannuation schemes; training of youth schemes and technical classes; wages and hours of labour; discipline; piecework, etc., of female employees; conditions of workrooms, costumes, baths, dining facilities, etc., of female employees; wages, hours, and working conditions of men employees and their relation to trade unions; social activities in factories; bands, athletic clubs, holidays and holiday arrangements; and housing schemes; each member of the deputation being responsible for a paper on one of the groups of subjects. The net result of the visit of the deputation was the collection of a considerable amount of valuable information respecting betterment schemes: information which, no doubt, had an influence on the directors when the plans for the erection of the last section of the M'Neil Street premises were being considered. It had the subsidiary result of showing also that, while so far as wages and hours of labour were concerned, the Co-operative societies were decidedly in the front, in provision of outlets for the social activities of their employees and in housing and environment schemes they were far behind the best which was being done by private firms. It is interesting to note, in view of the fact that since then both the delegates to the Scottish Wholesale Society's meeting and to the Baking Society's meeting have refused to adopt superannuation schemes for their employees, that in every one of the firms which were visited, including the C.W.S., a superannuation or pension scheme was in operation; in some cases non-contributory and in other cases contributory. It is noticeable also that, in two of them, housing schemes of an elaborate nature were in operation, and that, in each case, a town on the most up-to-date garden city lines had been erected. It is perhaps also worthy of note here that, as this book is being written, these firms have been placed first and second respectively in a competition as to which firms in Great Britain are the best employers, while no Co-operative society is even mentioned.

This pamphlet, "Education By Impression," which was edited by Mr Young, must have been of some value in opening the eyes of the more farseeing Co-operators to what they had yet to do before the Co-operative movement could claim to be in

all respects a first-rank employer. On the other hand, Mr Young, in his editorial note, pointed out that it might be possible to carry organisation, even the organisation of an industrial heaven, that far that the independent character of the Scot might rebel. As a result of what he had seen, Mr Young recommended certain modifications which he thought could be made at M'Neil Street with advantage. Some of these have since been incorporated to a greater or lesser extent in the methods of works organisation in use at M'Neil Street.

#### A SECOND DEPUTATION.

So successful had the first visit to English factories been, and so great was the information acquired, especially on points affecting the welfare of the employees, that in the following year a second deputation was sent, which was equally successful in its results; and had it not been for the coming of war, doubtless others would have followed. Like their predecessors, the members of this deputation placed their impressions on paper, and these were also incorporated in a pamphlet which was issued under the title, "Seeing Is Believing."

On this second occasion, the deputation consisted of three ladies and six gentlemen, including Messrs Buchanan and M'Auslane, directors; and Mr Miller, distributive manager; and as on the previous occasion each member of the deputation was given a special subject, points in connection with which he or she had to note and report on. These points included housing; holiday camps; rest homes, etc.; profit-sharing and bonus to labour; general conditions of female employment; superannuation; factory equipment; shop organisation; apprentices and conditions of employment of female employees. In connection with the housing investigation, which was carried out by Mr Buchanan, Letchworth Garden City was visited, as well as several other garden villages of a more or less satisfactory character.

#### VALUABLE WORK.

There can scarcely be anyone who will question the educational value of such visits as these. Not only are they of great value educationally to those privileged to take part in them, but the results of the investigations carried out, when made available as these were, in book or pamphlet form, convey

much valuable information and become the means of imparting many new ideas to people to whom the larger books in which such information is to be found are not available. If they should have served, in however small a measure, in penetrating the veneer of complacency with which the average untravelled and uninformed Co-operator regards his own movement as in all things the last word in perfection of organisation and treatment of those employed, they would be worth far more to the movement than the few pounds which each trip cost.

#### THE YEARS OF WAR.

At first the war did not make much difference to the work of the educational committee or of its agencies, but as more and more of the younger male employees were called up or joined voluntarily, there was a perceptible falling off in the membership of the various agencies. The rowing club had to suspend operations altogether, and the band was hard put to it to maintain the balance of instruments, new players having to be brought in to take the places of those who had joined up. Meantime a senior choir had been formed, and did much good work, not only by providing concerts in St Mungo Hall, but by singing at concerts organised in aid of war charities and to provide entertainment for convalescent soldiers. In work of a semi-military character, the band also took a full share.

The educational committee also took charge of the funds organised by the various departments to provide parcels for employees serving with the Forces, and in this way a constant stream of parcels went from the Bakery to distant comrades. The provision of lectures by prominent men and women in the Co-operative and kindred movements continued to be a feature of the work carried on by the committee each winter, while it was usually arranged that some prominent Co-operator should give an address at the quarterly meeting held under the auspices of the committee, such addresses being generally on matters of current interest.

The work of an educational committee is usually arduous and somewhat discouraging. In commercial work the results of a policy are generally forthcoming immediately, but educational work is somewhat like scattering bread upon the waters. Doubtless good results accrue, but time must elapse



before they show themselves, and the intervening period is one of faith and hope. Then, also, educational work is work in which a departure from stereotyped methods is necessary occasionally. There is a monotony in doing the same work year after year, which tends to "grooviness," and this is a danger which must be avoided at all hazards, for from "grooviness" comes staleness and with staleness comes satiety. When an educational committee breaks new ground, as the Baking Society's committee did in 1913 with their deputation to works of prominent firms in England, interest is stimulated, and even the stereotyped work takes on a new freshness. In the future we may hope to see the good work already done by the Baking Society's educational committee broadening out in new directions, and acquiring fresh vigour with new successes. The educational committee has been in the past a welfare committee in the best meaning of that word, and without any of the prying, sometimes nicknamed "spying" by the employees, it has done much to promote the physical and mental wellbeing of those for whom it works. As the years pass, fresh outlets in this direction for its energies will also manifest themselves, and these it will take advantage of as readily as it has done in the past.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### MEN WHO WROUGHT.

GABRIEL THOMSON—JAMES BORROWMAN—DAVID SMITH—ROBERT CRAIG—  
WILLIAM BARCLAY—THOMAS SLATER—ANDREW BROWN—ALEXANDER  
FRASER—JOHN FERGUSON—DUNCAN M'CUCCLOCH—JAMES H. FORSYTH  
—JAMES YOUNG—PETER GLASSE—DANIEL H. GERRARD—JAMES BAIN  
—THE BOARD AT THE END OF FIFTY YEARS.

THE Co-operative movement has ever been rich in men and women who have given to it devoted, whole-hearted, and able service. There have always been men with sufficient faith in the principles on which the movement is based to spend themselves, their energies and their money, in furthering it, from the days when Robert Owen, working to better the conditions of the miserable creatures who were helping to pile up wealth for himself and his partners, discovered that it was through striving to help others that man could best help himself, and devoted his wealth and the remainder of his life to the promulgation of this doctrine. In men whose faith in this principle was great and whose work for its enthronement in the councils of the world was arduous the United Co-operative Baking Society has been rich. They have all of them been men who believed that Co-operation was the true principle of progress, and in their own way and time each one did his best to further the cause he had at heart.

#### GABRIEL THOMSON.

It is peculiar that of the man who played perhaps the most prominent part in the work of establishing the United Baking Society little has been placed on record. Mr Gabriel Thomson was a man in late middle life when the proposal to establish the S.C.W.S. was being discussed. He was a representative of St Rollox Society at the meeting at which it was finally decided that a Scottish Wholesale Society should be established, and moved the resolution to that effect. When the committee was

being formed he was appointed treasurer, and when the proposal for a federated bread baking society was being discussed he read a paper on the subject which went far to decide the delegates in favour of the proposal to establish the United Baking Society, there also moving the resolution in favour of its formation. He was appointed first chairman of the Society, thus acting as chairman of the U.C.B.S. and treasurer of the S.C.W.S. at the one time ; but he only remained at the head of affairs for the first year, and his official connection with the Society then severed. He died in the Townhead district about the end of the century.

#### JAMES BORROWMAN.

Those who knew James Borrowman have described him as one of the most effective Co-operative propagandists and platform men that the movement in Scotland has produced. He was a man of boundless energy and enthusiasm, and was filled with a lofty idealism which caused him to look ever ahead beyond the petty difficulties of the moment. Unfortunately, his abounding faith in the possibilities of Co-operation caused him to overlook sometimes the immediate and practical difficulties in the way and, reversing the position of the men who are unable to see the wood for the trees, his gaze was fixed so firmly on the beautiful vista ahead that he failed to observe the rocks in the pathway on which he trod until he had stumbled over them. Mr Borrowman was one of the pioneers of Crosshouse Society, but at the time when the Baking Society was being discussed he had just been appointed manager of the newly formed Wholesale Society and had joined the Anderston Society. He worked faithfully as secretary of the Baking Society until pressure of work for the S.C.W.S. caused him to resign, and but a few years later his unquenchable optimism caused him to make the mistake of allowing the Ironworks Society to overdraw largely on the Wholesale Society. This finished his outstanding work for the cause of Co-operation.

#### DAVID SMITH.

When Mr Borrowman resigned the secretaryship of the Baking Society he was succeeded by Mr David Smith, who had been acting as assistant secretary for some months before the



resignation took place. Mr Smith was a representative of St Rollox Society on the board of the U.C.B.S., making his first appearance as a representative from that society at the committee meeting which was held on 15th March 1872. On the resignation, in the summer of 1875, of Mr Robert Craig from the management of the Society, Mr Smith was appointed manager, and continued to act in that capacity until the end of 1889, when he resigned in order to start in business as a baker in Maryhill. Unfortunately, he did not succeed, and shortly afterwards went to South Africa. Evidently he did not find things to his liking there, for in a year or two he was back in Scotland again, and was acting as master of works in connection with the reconstruction work of the Drapery and Furnishing Society. He died almost exactly seven years after severing his connection with the Baking Society.

#### ROBERT CRAIG.

Mr Robert Craig was only a short time—two and a half years—in the service of the Society, but during that short period he did such good work as to cause a general regret on the part of those who knew him when ill-health caused him to sever his connection with it. In a vain effort to restore his health he went to Spain, but, finding that he was not benefiting by the change, he returned to Glasgow again, where he died in 1877. Mr Craig was a native of Barrhead, and before taking up his duties as cashier to the Baking Society he acted as bookkeeper with the Wholesale Society. He seems to have been of a most lovable disposition, beloved by all who came into contact with him.

#### WILLIAM BARCLAY.

The name of William Barclay will always be associated with the Scottish Co-operative Convalescent Homes Association, which he helped to found, and for which he worked earnestly and enthusiastically. In the early days of the U.C.B.S. he was associated with St Rollox Society, and it was as a member of that society that he was appointed to the chair of the Baking Society in 1870. He continued to act as chairman for fifteen months only, and then severed his connection with the committee. In his later years he was associated with Kinning

Park Society, and it was as a member of that society that he did his work in connection with the Homes Association.

THOMAS SLATER.

When Mr David Smith resigned the secretaryship of the Society to take up its management he was succeeded by Mr Thomas Slater, who represented London Road Society on the board, and Mr Slater continued to act as secretary until the end of 1887. During his term of office Mr Slater had proven himself a most efficient and painstaking secretary, and it was due to his initiative that the ground annual of the St James Street property was purchased by the Society. After ceasing his official connection with the Society he continued to take a keen interest in its affairs and at times even to criticise the policy of the directors through the columns of the press.

ANDREW BROWN.

It is probable that it was to the wise guidance of Mr Andrew Brown more than to the work of any other man that the Baking Society was able to overcome the difficulties of its early days. He was appointed to the chair in 1872, and continued to act as president during all the strenuous days when the proposals for building a branch bakery farther west were being discussed with vigour. When he became president the Society had many difficulties to contend with, not the least of which were inefficient workmen, while shortage of money retarded its operations to a very great extent. Mr Brown continued to act as chairman until his society—Paisley Provident—withdrew from membership at the end of 1880. All those who had the pleasure of knowing him speak of him as a cautious leader, shrewd and clear-sighted, who always took a business view of the proposals which came before the committee. Thus he was able to steer clear of the many pitfalls which lined the pathway of his Society.

ALEXANDER FRASER.

Mr Alexander Fraser succeeded Mr Brown in the chair. At the time of his appointment to the chair he had been continuously a member of the board of the Society from March

1873, as the representative of Busby Society, and he continued to perform the duties of president of the Society until the quarterly meeting which was held in December 1887. Mr Fraser had thus an unbroken connection with the committee of the Society for the long period of fourteen years, until then the longest period during which any member had filled a seat on the board. During his term of office he had seen the Society grow wondrously. He had seen it become too big for its home at St James Street, and had steered it safely to its new home, erected specially for its occupation, at M'Neil Street, and he felt that, that task accomplished, he did well to lay aside his task. He was a worthy successor to Mr Brown and a worthy predecessor of the men who followed him.

#### JOHN FERGUSON.

Mr Fraser was succeeded by Mr John Ferguson, of Glasgow Eastern Society. Before Mr Ferguson came to the Baking Society's board he had filled many positions of responsibility in the Eastern Society. He was member of the committee for a number of years, a member of the first educational committee of the society when it was formed in 1876, and was also president of the society for a number of years. In his own society and in the Baking Society he did good work for Co-operation, and was much respected by all who came into contact with him. He, too, joined the great majority a number of years ago.

#### DUNCAN M'CULLOCH.

Mr Duncan M'Culloch was born in the little village of Carfin in Lanarkshire. After serving his apprenticeship as a joiner in Wishaw, he came to Glasgow, and on marrying became connected with Kinning Park Society. In 1887 he was made president of the society, and afterwards a member of the then newly formed educational committee. He took a prominent part in the formation of the first branch of the Scottish Co-operative Women's Guild—Kinning Park Central branch—and came to be known amongst the ladies of the guild as "The Father of the Guild," a title of which he was justly proud. After having been for a short time a member of the committee of the Baking Society, he was elected chairman in 1889, and continued to occupy that honourable position for the long



period of fifteen years. During these years the Baking Society entered on a period of expansion which raised it from the position of a moderately sized bakery, doing a trade of 700 sacks a week, to that of the largest institution of its kind, with a trade of almost 4,000 sacks weekly. He saw the biscuit factory started, and during his term of office the Clydebank branch was opened and the Belfast branch was commenced. Mr M'Culloch also took a warm interest in the affairs of the Convalescent Homes Association, and he served for many years, until his death in the summer of 1915, as a director of this, "the brightest jewel in the Co-operative crown," as the chairman of the Homes Association sometimes describes it. Mr M'Culloch became again a president of Kinning Park Society, and there, as in the work of the Baking Society, he displayed enterprise, acumen, and firmness. He was a man of strong will and dominant personality, and his work on the various boards of the Co-operative movement with which he was associated was always marked by strong common sense. On the Co-operative Defence Committee and on the Scottish Sectional Board he was also a tower of strength; never favouring schemes or policies which were far in advance of the times, but never holding back when he thought action was for the benefit of the movement to which he had devoted the leisure moments of his life. For some time in 1915 he had been laid aside with illness, and as the Congress of that year met for its first session the news of his death arrived and cast a gloom over the minds of the Scotsmen present, who felt that one who had been all a man had gone from them.

#### JAMES H. FORSYTH.

The genial cashier of the Baking Society is one of the best known and most highly respected business men in the Co-operative movement. His balance-sheets are models of lucidity, and this feature is often commented on in the columns of the financial press. Mr Forsyth has had a lifelong acquaintance with Co-operative accounting. As a lad he entered the office of the Wholesale Society, and waited there until, as he himself has put it, he began to understand what double entry book-keeping really was. Then a desire to see other lands possessed him for a time, and he voyaged to the great Republic of the West.

He had been there for only two years, however, when the homing instinct possessed him, and returning to Glasgow, after a short interval, entered the office of the Baking Society as bookkeeper. Here he had been for some four years when Mr David Smith retired from the management of the Society, and the board, deciding that they were going to try and work the Society for a time at least without a manager, appointed Mr Forsyth cashier and bookkeeper, and cashier and bookkeeper he has been ever since. Mr Forsyth is one of those officials who treat the business for which they work as if it was their own. He is indefatigable in his efforts to maintain and even to improve the wellbeing and to accelerate the progress of the Baking Society, and during the strenuous years of the war, when the demands of the War Office were depleting his staff, nevertheless he "carried on" in a manner which won the approval of management and delegates alike. He is one of those careful, painstaking officials who are assets of great value to the societies fortunate enough to possess them.

#### JAMES YOUNG.

Mr James Young, the widely respected manager of the Baking Society, is an idealist turned business man. He has the vision of the poet, and is ever looking forward from the sordid to-day to the brighter and better to-morrow; but he is none the less a business man. He served on the board of the Baking Society as a representative of Uddingston Society for some three years before he was appointed, in 1899, manager of the Society. Since then he has conducted the business of the Society wisely and well, and his advice is eagerly sought after in matters connected with the trade. He is very popular with all with whom business brings him into contact, for he is recognised by all to be a man of high principle, who is incapable of stooping to anything mean. To this aspect of his character is probably due the remarkably good terms which have always existed between the Society and the employees, for he is kind and considerate to those whom fortune has placed under his charge. Unfortunately, in these latter years his health has not been quite as robust as his friends would like, but one and all hope that many years of service yet remain to him.

## PETER GLASSE.

Mr Peter Glasse succeeded Mr Slater as secretary. He was the representative of St George on the board of the Baking Society at the time of Mr Slater's resignation, and was for many years one of the most active Co-operators in the West of Scotland. He took a very active part in all the strenuous work which fell to the lot of good platform men during and after the boycott of 1896-97. On several occasions he served with distinction in the chair of his own society, and was for many years a member of the board of the Wholesale Society. He demitted office as secretary of the Baking Society in the spring of 1895. From 1896 until the merging of the West of Scotland Co-operative Defence Committee in the National Co-operative Defence Association, Mr Glasse acted as chairman of the committee, and then as chairman of the National Association until its work was merged in that of the Scottish Sectional Board. He died early in 1917 after a life which had been full of service to Co-operation.

## D. H. GERRARD, J.P.

Mr Daniel H. Gerrard, J.P., is one of the best known figures in the Co-operative movement, and it is a matter for sincere regret to his many friends that he is not able to go out and in amongst them as of yore, and doubly regrettable that illness should have stricken him down two months before the Society for which he had worked so hard completed its fiftieth year of existence. Mr Gerrard is a Southerner, but he has lived so long in Scotland that he has become acclimatised. His first connection with Co-operation was with the second Maryhill Society, in the formation of which he took an active part, and of which he was president for many years. When that society amalgamated with St George he threw himself with equal vigour and success into the work of his new society, and ere long was appointed to the presidency. Then fifteen years ago he was elected to the chair of the Baking Society, and continued to act in that capacity until he was compelled by the orders of his medical man to give it up. He was an able and earnest advocate of Co-operation, and took an active part in the strenuous work of the boycott days as well as in Co-operative



missionary work in Ireland and elsewhere. It is the earnest wish of all friends that in his retirement he will be long spared to look back with complacency over his many fights for the cause he loved.

#### JAMES BAIN.

Mr James Bain, the genial secretary of the Baking Society, has had a long and active connection with the cause of Co-operation in Glasgow. He succeeded Mr John Ferguson as chairman of Glasgow Eastern Society, and was chairman of that society when the Dalmarnock Road premises were opened in 1893. He was also treasurer of the society for a number of years. In the spring of 1895 he was elected secretary of the Baking Society in succession to Mr Glasse, and that position he continues to fill with honour to himself and profit to the Society. Nor, although the secretaryship of the Baking Society would seem to be enough spare-time work for any man, does he rest content with that. Ever since its formation he has acted as president of that beneficent Co-operative institution, the Co-operative Veterans Association. In his work for the Bakery he has always been conscientious and clear, and has also done much work which lies outside his special work as secretary. For example, he read a paper a number of years ago at a conference of representatives of the Glasgow societies, in which he advocated strongly the desirability of establishing a system of bread baking which would enable the bakers to begin their work at a reasonable hour. He is getting on in years now, but his minutes are as clearly written as ever, and his many friends hope that it will be long ere he has to lay down his secretarial pen.

#### THE PRESENT BOARD.

The members of the present board have served Co-operation well in many capacities, and several of them have had long years of service on the board of the Baking Society. Mr Buchanan, the present chairman, for instance, was elected to the board of the Society in the year in which Mr Bain became secretary. Mr M'Lean has represented Glasgow Eastern Society for many years, and Mr Young St Rollox for a long period. Mr Monteith had done good work in St George Society before he came to M'Neil Street, while this is equally true of Mr M'Lay's connection with Cowlairst. Mr Hamilton was for a number of

years the representative of Pollokshaws Society, and his untimely death while this book was being written served to act as a reminder that "life is but a fleeting vapour." Another member of the group who has done good service to Co-operation in his own society as well as in the Baking Society's board is Mr Cadiz, for a number of years the energetic secretary of the Glasgow and Suburbs Conference Association. Mr Johnstone has done good service in Shettleston Society, and Mr Simpson in London Road Society; while Mr Walker, the "baby" of the board—he only joined it two months before the end of the fiftieth year—has been well known for a number of years as a representative of Clydebank Society.

Nor can we close this record of "men who wrought" without reference to some of the men who, while not quite so prominent in its affairs as others, yet had something to do with shaping the destinies of the Society. Prominent amongst such was Mr Alexander, who represented Paisley Provident Society on the board from the election of Mr Brown as president until their society withdrew from the Federation. For the greater part of the time he acted as treasurer of the Federation. Mr Ballantyne, of Thornliebank, also was one of the earliest members of the board, and continued to be associated with its work, as stable inspector, for many years. The late Mr James M'Murran, of Glasgow Eastern, was the Federation's last treasurer, the office being abolished during his tenure. Nor must the names of the late Homer Robertson and Michael Shiels be omitted. For a number of years Mr Robertson represented St George Society on the board, while Mr Shiels was for long the representative of Cowlares Society, and both gentlemen died in harness within a few months of each other. For a long time two gentlemen very well known in another section of the Co-operative movement, Messrs Robert Macintosh and Allan Gray, acted together as auditors of the Society. Mr Wells, the respected secretary of Cambuslang Society, was an auditor of later date, retiring when the amended Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1913 made it compulsory that auditors of Co-operative societies must be public auditors. He was succeeded by Mr John M. Biggar. The auditor who has served the members of the Society for the longest period, however, is Mr William H. Jack, who has audited the Society's

books for over twenty-one years, having been elected in September 1897 on the retiral of Mr Allan Gray.

The work of many others, who in one way and another helped while they could, has gone to build up the Society. They are gone, leaving often not even a name behind them, but the result of their labours is preserved as by a monument in the strong, virile Society of which we speak so familiarly as "The U.C.B.S."



# STATISTICS.

IN general readers do not care much for statistics, but no record of the Society would be complete which did not give in some statistical form the growth which the Society has made during fifty years. The table given is not long, however, nor is it difficult to follow. It gives the position of the Society at the end of the first year, and at the end of each tenth year thereafter. In addition there are given the first balance-sheet issued by the Society and that issued for the 200th quarter. Readers can thus see for themselves the marvellous growth which we have tried, however inadequately, to picture.

*Statistical Statement showing the development of the Federation during the Jubilee Period.*

| TEN-YEAR PERIODS.                    | No. of Federated Societies. | Shares Held. | Shares and Deposits. | Sales.        | Profits.    | Reserve Fund. | Depreciation. | Paid for Educational Purposes. | Paid for Charitable Purposes. |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                      |                             |              | £ s. d.              | £ s. d.       | £ s. d.     | £ s. d.       | £ s. d.       | £ s. d.                        | £ s. d.                       |
| 1869 (Commencement of Society),..... | 8                           | ..           | 193 12 0             | 5,081 13 6    | 23 3 1      | ..            | 30 15 8       | ..                             | ..                            |
| 1869 (January 1870),.....            | 8                           | ..           | 6,251 6 7            | 27,433 6 10   | 1,850 5 5   | 696 11 5      | 440 1 3       | 8 2 0                          | 5 5 0                         |
| 1878 (January 1879)                  | 23                          | 4,217        | 33,209 9 10          | 55,699 15 9   | 3,313 0 5   | 1,352 10 0    | 913 9 9       | 6 0 0                          | 21 0 0                        |
| 1888 (January 1889)                  | 39                          | 10,037       | 143,681 12 3         | 327,328 3 4   | 26,845 0 2  | 7,400 0 0     | 8,890 6 1     | 474 3 8                        | 309 9 4                       |
| 1898 (January 1899)                  | 94                          | 80,231       | 356,254 19 3         | 567,604 19 5  | 43,561 9 0  | 37,400 0 0    | 13,967 4 9    | 876 13 10                      | 907 3 10                      |
| 1908 (January 1909)                  | 169                         | 155,915      | 556,841 16 6         | 1,251,224 5 9 | 62,615 15 5 | 89,500 0 0    | 29,845 12 6   | 1,424 13 1                     | 643 13 9                      |
| 1918 (January 1919)                  | 211                         | 241,643      |                      |               |             |               |               |                                |                               |

*Dr.*

## CAPITAL ACCOUNT

|   |      | LIABILITIES. |       |
|---|------|--------------|-------|
| To Members' Claims, as per Share Ledger ..... |      | £193         | 12 0  |
| " " Building Fund .....                       |      | 145          | 0 0   |
| " Owing Messrs Penman .....                   | £104 | 0            | 0     |
| " " Gibson & Walker .....                     | 150  | 15           | 0     |
| " " Scottish Wholesale Society .....          | 86   | 19           | 7     |
| " " R. Geddes & Sons .....                    | 18   | 7            | 6     |
| " " M. Muir & Sons .....                      | 34   | 15           | 0     |
| " " R. Taylor .....                           | 6    | 14           | 0     |
| " " P. Bertram .....                          | 1    | 5            | 9     |
|   |      | 402          | 16 10 |
| " Profit .....                                |      | 64           | 4 10  |
|   |      | £805         | 13 8  |

*Dr.*

## CAPITAL ACCOUNT

|   |          | LIABILITIES. |    |
|---|----------|--------------|----|
| 241,643 Shares at 20/<br>each .....                             | £241,643 | 0            | 0  |
| Less Unpaid .....   | 703      | 10           | 0  |
|   | £240,939 | 10           | 0  |
| Societies' Deposits at 12 Months' Notice<br>of Withdrawal ..... | 93,571   | 6            | 1  |
| Societies' Deposits at Call .....                               | 104,462  | 6            | 6  |
| Surplus Credited to Societies' Deposits<br>Account .....        | 31,837   | 4            | 0  |
|   | £470,810 | 6            | 7  |
| Deposits (Private) at 12 Months' Notice<br>of Withdrawal .....  | £55,838  | 7            | 8  |
| Deposits (Private) at Call .....                                | 30,193   | 2            | 3  |
|   | 86,031   | 9            | 11 |
| Societies Overpaid .....  | 5,980    | 1            | 1  |
| Bonus for Half-year .....                                       | 4,770    | 0            | 4  |
| Rents .....   | 12       | 15           | 0  |
| St Mungo Hall Rents Paid in Advance .....                       | 5        | 0            | 0  |
| Balance of Taxes, Insurance, and Telephones .....               | 4,974    | 13           | 5  |
| Goods Account .....   | 13,075   | 14           | 0  |
| Expenses Account .....  | 1,863    | 9            | 2  |
| Total Liabilities .....   | £587,523 | 9            | 6  |
| RESERVES—   |          |              |    |
| Reserve Fund .....  | £89,500  | 0            | 0  |
| Insurance Fund—   |          |              |    |
| Fire and Marine ..  | £24,900  | 0            | 0  |
| Employers' Liability ..   | 5,680    | 0            | 0  |
| Third Party .....   | 2,180    | 0            | 0  |
|   | 32,760   | 0            | 0  |
| Educational and Benevolent Fund ....                            | 2,337    | 8            | 4  |
| Balance to next Half-year .....                                 | 1,845    | 15           | 4  |
|   | 126,443  | 3            | 8  |
|   | £713,966 | 13           | 2  |

1869 (JANUARY 1870).

Cr.

| ASSETS.                             |          |  |           |
|-------------------------------------|----------|--|-----------|
| By Cash in Bank and on hand .....   |          |  | £118 2 10 |
| " Flour, etc., in Stock .....       | £87 10 7 |  |           |
| " Rent Due .....                    | 1 10 0   |  |           |
| " Owing by Societies .....          | 244 5 1  |  |           |
| " Fixed Stock .....                 | 243 15 8 |  |           |
| " New Buildings, Paid to Account .. | 110 9 6  |  |           |
|                                     |          |  | 687 10 10 |
|                                     |          |  |           |
|                                     |          |  | £805 13 8 |

1918 (JANUARY 1919).

Cr.

| ASSETS.                                 |               |  |               |
|---|---------------|--|---------------|
| Investments, as per Investment Account— |               |  |               |
| Shares .....                            | £33,812 18 7  |  |               |
| Deposits .....                          | 348,257 18 6  |  |               |
|   |               |  | £382,070 17 1 |
| Goods in Stock—                         |               |  |               |
| M'Neil Street .....                     | £28,384 13 9  |  |               |
| Clydebank Branch .....                  | 7,255 16 8    |  |               |
| Rothsay Branch .....                    | 278 15 4      |  |               |
| Belfast Branch .....                    | 5,922 15 8    |  |               |
| Camp .....                              | 18 0 0        |  |               |
| Purvey Department .....                 | 413 11 1      |  |               |
| St Mungo Halls .....                    | 17 7 4        |  |               |
|   |               |  | 42,290 19 10  |
| Stock of Provender in Stables—          |               |  |               |
| Glasgow .....                           | £445 0 7      |  |               |
| Clydebank .....                         | 101 17 5      |  |               |
|   |               |  | 546 18 0      |
| Goods Account Prepaid .....             |               |  | 47,236 8 5    |
| Goods Account .....                     | £27,841 1 1   |  |               |
| Sundries Account .....                  | 242 7 9       |  |               |
| Bread Delivery, Hire and Shoeing        |               |  |               |
| Account .....                           | 16 17 0       |  |               |
| Manure and Hayseed .....                | 33 4 10       |  |               |
|   |               |  | 28,133 10 8   |
| Rents—                                  |               |  |               |
| Tenements—Govan Street .....            | £87 7 6       |  |               |
| M'Neil Street East .....                | 96 10 0       |  |               |
| Belfast .....                           | 29 5 0        |  |               |
| St Mungo Halls .....                    | 46 1 3        |  |               |
|   |               |  | 259 3 9       |
| Land and Buildings .....                |               |  | 201,500 0 0   |
| Cash in Banks .....                     | £11,764 14 11 |  |               |
| Cash on hand .....                      | 164 0 6       |  |               |
|   |               |  | 11,928 15 5   |
|   |               |  | £713,966 13 2 |





# OUR FALLEN HEROES

Pro patria mortui

**GLASGOW**

Seaman JOHN FRASER.





Pte. GEORGE BANKS, Scottish Rifles  
Mason  
Killed, July 1915



Drummer ROBERT M'DONALD, H.L.I.  
Tinsmith  
Died, 5th September 1915



Sergt. JAMES COLLINS, Seaforths  
Biscuit Baker  
Killed, 15th September 1915



Pte. HARRY MEDDICKS, H.L.I.  
Biscuit Baker  
Killed, 15th September 1915



Seaman JAMES NICOL, R.N.D.  
Warehouseman  
Died, 30th November 1915



Pte. DOUGAL FERGUSON, H.L.I.  
Mason  
Killed, 27th January 1916



Pte. CHARLES SMITH ANDERSON, Gordons?  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, 17th March 1916



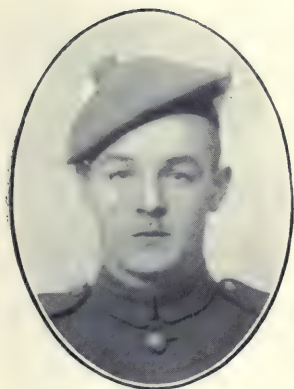
Pte. JAMES JACK JARVIE, Gordons  
Pastry Baker  
Died of Wounds, 2nd July 1916



Pte. WILLIAM C. FULTON, Camerons  
Pastry Baker  
Died of Wounds, 21st August 1916



Pte. JOHN DELAHUNTY, Irish Guards  
Baker's Assistant  
Killed, 15th September 1916



Pte. WILLIAM H. CULLEN, H.L.I.  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, 31st October 1916



Pte. ALEXANDER M'LEOD, H.L.I.  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, 18th November 1916





Sergt. ALEXANDER STEEL, H.L.I.  
Storeman  
Killed, 17th November 1916



Pte. JOHN NEWLANDS, Gordons  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, 29th March 1917.



Pte. WILLIAM NIMMO, Gordons  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, 4th March 1917



Pte. JOHN CAMPBELL SINCLAIR, Seaforths  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, 23rd April 1917



Pte. JOHN BALLANTYNE, Royal Scots  
Clerk  
Killed, 23rd April 1917



Pte. JOHN KENNEDY, Royal Scots Fusiliers  
Clerk  
Killed, 23rd April 1917



Pte. CHARLES HAMILTON, Scottish Rifles  
Warehouseman  
Killed, 3rd May 1917



Pte. JAMES KENNEDY, H.L.I.  
Biscuit Baker  
Killed, 27th June 1917



Pte. PETER THOMSON, Gordons  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, 31st July 1917



Gunner ROBERT SUMMERS, R.F.A.  
Vanman  
Killed, 21st July 1917



Pte. JOSEPH M'ALEER, H.L.I.  
Painter  
Killed, 10th July 1917



Pte. GEORGE DODDS, Camerons  
Vanman  
Killed, 1st August 1917





Pte. THOMAS URQUHART, Camerons  
Hoistman  
Died of Wounds, 22nd September 1917



Pte. ALEXANDER M'LEOD, H.L.I.  
Clerk  
Killed, 27th September 1917



Pte. ALAN CRAWFORD, Machine Gun Corps  
Warehouse Clerk  
Killed, 24th October 1917



Lce.-Cpl. ALLAN F. KERR, Royal Scots  
Vanman  
Killed, 22nd October 1917



Lee.-Cpl. HECTOR HARVEY, Gordons  
Bread Baker  
Killed, 16th November 1917



Cpl. GEORGE DICKIE, Scottish Rifles  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, 14th January 1918



Pte. ALEXANDER WATSON, Royal Scots  
Bread Baker  
Killed, 28th March 1918



Pte. JOHN REID, R.A.S.C.  
Vanman  
Killed, 19th April 1918



Pte. ROBERT GARDNER, Camerons  
Pastry Baker  
Killed, April 1918



Pte. THOMAS FAULDS, Scottish Rifles  
Motor Driver  
Killed, 10th October 1918



Pte. AARON KERR, Royal Scots Fusiliers  
Painter  
Killed, 10th October 1918



Lead.-Signalman JAMES M'PHERSON, R.N.V.R.  
Bread Baker  
Died, 2nd November 1918



**CLYDEBANK BRANCH**

Pte. JAMES M'GINLEY, R.A.S.C.  
Motor Driver  
Killed, 7th June 1915



Lce.-Cpl. JAMES HENDRIE, Argylls  
Baker  
Killed, 24th April 1917



Pte. ROBERT STEVENSON, Lancashire Fusiliers  
Baker  
Killed, 19th August 1917



Pte. JAMES AGNEW, Royal Scots  
Warehouseman  
Killed, 6th October 1917



Cpl. ROBERT NIXON, R.A.S.C.  
Baker  
Killed, 21st March 1918



Pte. DONALD H. GRANT, Camerons  
Baker  
Killed, 28th March 1918



Pte. ROBERT HOPE, Argylls  
Baker  
Killed, September 1918.

**BELFAST BRANCH**

Sergt. SAMUEL LOWRY, D.C.M., R.I.R.

Baker's Assistant

Killed, 1st July 1916



Lce.-Cpl. JAMES M'INTOSH, R.I.R.

Warehouseman

Killed, 1st July 1916



Bugler SAMUEL WARD, R.I.R.

Baker

Killed, 1st September 1916





Pte. EDWARD ROWNEY, R.I.R.  
Baker's Assistant  
Killed, April 1917



Pte. FRANK TAGGART, R.A.S.C.  
Baker  
Died, August 1918

**LEITH DEPOT**



Pte. THOMAS ALSTON, Royal Scots  
Motor Driver  
Killed, 23rd July 1916









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